

‘M.’ —  
THE APOSTLE  
AND  
THE EVANGELIST

Indian Culture in Practice

[ PART II ]



**By the same author—**

Sri Ma Darshan, in Bengali, Parts I to VII

Sri Ma Darshan, in Hindi, Parts I & II

M.—The Apostle and the Evangelist, Parts I & II—a translation (into English) of Sri Ma Darshan Bengali I & II.

The series entitled 'Sri Ma Darshan' comprises more than 15 volumes, out of which only the above volumes have been published so far. The rest will come out in due course.

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# 'M.' — THE APOSTLE AND THE EVAGELIST

—A continuation of M's Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna—

[ VOLUME TWO ]

by  
SWAMI NITYATMANANDA

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

By the grace of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Deva, the first edition of volume I of 'M, the Apostle & the Evangelist' appeared in print in 1967 in spite of many an abstacle & difficulty.

In this book are recorded—in the form of a diary—the conversations of 'M' (Professor Mahendranath Gupta), an erudite scholar and direct and intimate house-holder-disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, with the devotees of Thakur and with the author himself.

These conversations and teachings were originally penned in more than seven thousand pages of the Bengali work entitled 'Sri Ma Darshan', by the spiritual child and sevak of 'M', Swami Nityatmananda.

About 2500 pages of this work have already appeared in print—some even in reprint—in seven volumes in Bengali.

The publication of the entire series of Sri Ma Darshan is being undertaken initially in three languages—Bengali, Hindi and English.

The main theme of this work is : How to make it possible to live the divine life of joy and peace, described in the Vedas though living in household, the home of pleasure and pain.

Srimati Ishwar Devi Gupta discovered the fountain of this divine joy and peace in the holy conversation of 'M' recorded in Sri Ma Darshan. Inspired by this long cherished discovery, she at once began to translate it as a prayerful offering in Hindi for her own sake and also for the Hindi knowing brothers and sisters.

Subsequently it was translated into English at the wish of the English knowing bhaktas and others educated in the western way. The English language which is the meeting ground of the eastern and western cultures is the finest medium for carrying Sri Ramakrishna's word of hope and cheer far and wide into the world. This is how 'M, the Apostle and the Evangelist' came into being, by the grace of Swamiji Maharaj and the love and blessing of other bhaktas and tyagis.

This very love and blessing helped to popularize the first volume so much that its second edition became necessary in a very short time. Along with it grew a demand for the other volumes of this work.

It is to meet this demand that the present volume II is seeing the light of print.

The Revered Swami Nityatmanandaji has graciously given his consent to Sri Ma Trust to undertake the publishing of the entire series of 'Sri Ma Darshan' and has blessed the project, in deference to the wishes of his bhaktas.

The bhaktas in general and the Trust in particular are grateful to him.

The Trust also offers its sincere thanks to all those friends who have helped—and are helping—in any way, in the production, publication and distribution of 'Sri Ma Darshan'.

It is the heartfelt prayer of these humble sevaks at the lotus feet of the Omniscient Lord that all brothers and sisters may gain faith in and devotion to Bhagavan and attain supreme bliss and peace through a deep and reverent study, along with practice, of this scriptural record.

Sri Ma Trust

—Sri Ramakrishna Sri Ma Prakashan Trust—  
579, Sector 18 B, Chandigarh

Birth-Day of the Holy Mother, 1970.

ISHWAR DEVI GUPTA  
Publisher

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHANSA

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## INTRODUCTION

By the grace of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Deva, the second part of *Sri Ma Darshan* is being published. Like the first part, the second part also contains some new talks of Paramahansa Deva and the Holy Mother and also those of Swami Vivekananda and other intimate disciples of the Master, and, it is a commentary of the "Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna" by the writer of the Gospel. Besides, it is a commentary of the Upanishad, the Gita, the Bhagavata, the Purana, the Bible and other scriptures in the light of the life of Sri Ramakrishna.

The scene of the First Part is laid in the Forest of Mihijam. Like the lion in a forest, free from all obstacles—it is the picture of M there. Full of joy, he roams freely in the regions of his noble and lofty ideas. Sometimes even while coming down to the worldly plain, he engages his intellect and mind to commenting upon the Gita, the Upanishad and other holy books.

Establishing the life of the sadhus and brahmacharis on a firm footing formed also another function of M at Mihijam. That is why M's image in Mihijam is that of a teacher—full of bliss, vigour and robust holy optimism.

On the other hand, the stage of action of Part II is the great city of Calcutta. Here M is surrounded by all kinds of devotees. The mind of the devotees is restless due to the undulations of pleasures and pains. Identifying himself with their feelings, M is self-surrendering and prayerful—like the maid in a big house-hold. By showering the 'Kathamrita'—the Nectar of the Gospel, day and night, he is infusing life into the minds of the lifeless devotees. Breaking the fiery nest of despair, he is leading them on to the happy abode of joy and peace.

M says, "Sri Ramakrishna is God incarnated in a human body." Assuring fearlessness to the devotees fallen into the burning fire of the world, Sri Ramakrishna says, "Hold on to me, meditate on me and me alone and that will do." And again he declares in a loud voice his promise, "Verily, verily, I swear unto you, whosoever will think on me shall inherit my wealth even as a son does inherit his father's wealth, and my wealth consists of *jnana—bhakti, viveka-vairajya, shanti-sukha, prema-sa-adhi*, (knowledge and devotion, discrimination and dispassion, peace and happiness, deep love and realisation of God.)

M shows the path to the bhaktas and promising hope says : Sri Bhagavan came down in a human body only the other day. What fear ? Establish a relationship of love with Him and live in the world. Decide by imagination one suitable relationship—such as father, mother, friend, the lord and the like—and begin the work. Later on this very relationship of imagination will assume the form of reality which will take possession of the mind and the heart of the devotee. Then the devotee will have two personalities—one the worldly man and the other the illumined man of God. When this man of the world, falling into the various whirlpools of pleasure and pain, will get drowned, his divine counterpart, the illumined man in him being awakened will transform this drowning weakling into a mighty hero.

In spite of the repeated entreaties of M, Sri Ramakrishna, the avatara of this age at the instance of the Mother of the Universe, had commanded M to live in the household and teach the 'Bhagavata' to the humanity, afflicted with the fire of the world. Like Prahlada, Janak and others having attained perfect sannyasa within, M distributed day and night the Bhagavata, the nectar of the words of Sri Ramakrishna, the dispeller of worldly troubles and tribulations, for a long time, close upon half a century.

For God's work, even though unable to embrace the Vedantic Sannyasa, M was blessed with the Tantric Sannyasa by Sri Ramakrishna. M said, "Thakur endowed Baburam and myself with Tantric Sannyasa on the same day."

The desire for Vedantic Sannyasa kept itself awake in the mind of M throughout his life. Thus we see that M, four or five times during his active life, having renounced all work, like a sannyasi, spent time in practising tapasya now in Kamarpukur and Jayrambati, now in Puri and Kashi and now in Haridwar and Rishikesh. The forest-stay of M in Mihijam is also the result of his secret inner urge for the Vedantic Sannyasa.

It is Sri Ramakrishna as God who has dispensed sorrow and pain in the world. It is again He as God incarnate who shows the path to the Life Eternal. Reading this book and accepting the dispensation of Sri Ramakrishna, may the Humanity, broken down by worldly pains, attain the illumined state—the children of Immortal Bliss—is the prayer of the author of this book.

May Sri Sri Thakur bless those whose help has made it possible for the book to be published—this too is the hearty prayer of the author.

*Swami Nityatmananda*

Sri Ramakrishna Math,  
(Tulsi Math), Rishikesh.  
Akshay Tiritiya 1370 (Bengali Year)  
1962 A.D.

From God's word, though a little to understand the  
Yogi's meaning. M. was present with the Tenth  
year of Sri Ramakrishna, M. said, "Tenth  
Brahman and myself with Tenth Brahman on the line  
the."

The desire for the Yogi's Sangha kept him  
in the mind of M. throughout his life. Thus we see that  
M. for the first time during his active life, having returned  
to work like a samnyasi spent time in searching for  
a place in Kamrupa and Jayantipur, now in Puri  
and Kashi and now in Haridwar and Rishikesh. The  
year of M. in Mithun is also the result of his  
long hope for the Yogi's Sangha.

It is Sri Ramakrishna to God who has departed  
sorrow and pain in the world. It is again the God  
incomprehensible shows the path to the life eternal. Reading  
this book and describing the disposition of Sri Ramakrishna,  
may the humanity be taken down by worldly pains and  
the blessed state—the children of Immortal Bliss—the  
prayer of the author of this book.

May Sri Sri The Lord give those whose help has made  
it possible for the book to be published—this too is the  
prayer of the author.

Author: N. K. Chatterjee

Sri Ramakrishna Math

Haridwar, India

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## CHAPTER ONE

### M IN CALCUTTA

Morton School, 50 Amherst Street; room near the staircase of the first floor. M is seated on a mat on the floor facing the east; the bhaktas are in front. By living at a health resort for several months the health of M has undergone sufficient improvement. Wearing a shirt of long-cloth and a smiling face he is discoursing upon matters spiritual with Dr. Bakshi, Advocate Lalit, Lalit of Bhatpara, Jiten the Younger\* and others. Arrive in turn Amulya the Elder,\* Ramani and Manoranjana. The room is packed with many other devotees. Vinay has gone to the Math.

This morning, M has returned from Mihijam after seven or eight months. Throughout the day, sadhus and bhaktas have been paying visits. Endless is the joy of the bhaktas at the holy darshana of the beloved. The residence of M has, as it were changed today into Triveni\*—by the meeting of M, sadhus and bhaktas.

Now the evening sets in. Shukalal, Brahmachari Ramesh and Mohan enter the room. Having exchanged how-do-you-do with Shukalal M says, "Well, where is he?" Not being able to notice Mohan in darkness he has made this enquiry. Coming forward, Mohan answers humbly, "Here I am, sir, here."

M (To Mohan, pointing at Lalit)—Just see. He practises law. There is no harm in the study of law but for the sake of money it is not right to turn truth into lies.

---

\* The words 'younger' and 'Elder' have been used, in fun, to indicate stature and not age :

\*Conjunction of the three holy currents—Ganga, Jamuna and Saraswati at Prayag (Allahabad).

Study is all right but not its practice. If you say that law is untruth, what use studying it ? The answer to it : Is non-studying of it truth ? This too is false. Brahman is truth, the world false—this pertains to a stage—the last word. Till that stage is reached one should live with these things. There are comparatives and superlatives. Studies and the like are helpful. When God is realised all these are no longer needed. Till then holding on to all these is worth while.

M (with a smile)—To Hari Maharaj came a person to embrace sannyasa. On enquiry, it was found that he had a wife, son, daughter—all. Hari Maharaj said, "Why do you want to come here leaving them in difficulties?" The person replied, "Sir, all these, wife and son, are false." And many long talks did he indulge in. Hearing all this, says he, "Well, this too is false—you have married, you have children, coming here leaving them behind! What do you say, Is it truth not to look after them?" It is different with those who have not married. Even so, as long as the parents are alive one should serve them.

The evening lamp is brought in. M salutes with folded hands. And with soft clapping of hands he repeats the mantra, *Hari bol, Hari bol* (Chant Lord's name). Then all meditate for a while.

Now, Jiten the Elder arrives accompanied by Kaviraj Virinchi. Jiten the Elder has passed law and is a bench-clerk in the High Court—a very devoted and noble soul. With the usual welfare enquiries after M being over, Jiten the Younger asks Jiten the Elder, "Brother Jit, have you changed residence?" Jiten the Elder replies, "Yes brother. Twenty years have gone by in Brindaban Mullick Lane but I feel it was just the other day." Hearing this M immediately turns the topic of the conversation and says, "It's no credit to you. He kept you, so you lived. Your brother has passed away. But then God himself will make an alternative provision."

M (To the bhaktas)—Various are the temperaments. Some live in the world like the leech and sink lower and lower. *Sattva*, *rajas*, *tan:as*, mixture of these three qualities has given rise to so many different natures. To conquer this nature is the problem of life.

“The stream of nature flows in one direction. Another stream coming from the opposite direction can alone overcome it. The opposite stream flows in when one takes refuge in Him. Poison and its antedote, both He has created. The antedote is the company of sadhus, living in solitude, pilgrimage, prayer to Him and all that.”

M (To Kartik)—Yes Doctor, which verse of the Gita?

Kartik—

देवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेताम् तरन्ति ते ॥

(Gita VII : 14)

M also began to repeat with him. The Doctor knows the whole Gita by heart.

M (To the bhaktas)—Just see. The Lord says : My Maya is uncrossable, that is, it is almost impossible to cross over. But then by taking refuge in Me alone it is possible—to go beyond Maya, that is to conquer the world, to subjugate nature. This is only possible by His grace. Impossible otherwise. Entrapped by the five elements, Brahman weeps and laments.

“Taking up a body, the internal lust, anger and greed, and external grief, suffering and poverty—all are inevitable. Prakriti must play its role. Thakur suffered from cancer for ten months. Ah ! what a tribulation ! Why this suffering ? To teach humanity ; to take a body is to entail all this. Once, under the Bakul tree he felt the sex

urge. So he said to the Mother, "If this happens Ma, I shall pass the knife over my throat." Just see, even such an avatara, even he feels lustful, suffers from disease. One day, Thakur said, "I saw the flower of pumpkin in a dream." A bhakta said, "May I bring it for you to eat?" He answered, "No. So much worthless trash do I see in dream." Just see, taking up a body, even the avatara does everything just like a human-being—sees pumpkin and gourd in dream. This is what is called: 'Entrapped by the five elements, Brahman weeps and laments.' But even then God has to be sought after.

"Human nature He has created and it is He who helps conquer it. Sattva, rajas and tamas—these three gunas are the constituents of Prakriti. Their function is to bind man to the world. The way to freedom from their clutches has also been shown by Him. Says he, "O man ! surrender thyself to Me. Then only wilt thou be able to set thyself free from the clutches of the uncrossable Maya. No other path, this the only path, to surrender.

"*Tapasya*, what does it mean ?—The effort to overcome Prakriti is called *tapasya*—the company of sadhus, living in solitude, praying to him, weeping secretly in solitude while doing all this, if His grace dawns Prakriti is overcome. To overcome Prakriti is to realize God."

M—It's good to retire into solitude at times. That's why Thakur prescribed it. Living in solitude is better than the hustle and bustle of the towns. He used to say, "In that country (meaning Kamarpukur) a hole is made in the earthen pot containing molasses and an earthen basin is below it. After six months, the molasses in the pot are turned into sugar-candy. The whole of the liquid is drained off. Let there be nocturnal discharge as happens with many. But that does not mean that sexual intercourse has to be indulged in. No it wouldn't matter. That which is left after that (natural) discharge will turn into candy.

"That is why, withdrawing the mind from this phenomenal world—sight, taste, smell, speech and touch, one has to retire into solitude for sometime. Living amidst them day and night one sinks low. Sights and scenery give rise to all sorts of desires for enjoyment. Thakur used to say, "There are two pits in the open. The water of one of them has dried up, that of the other remains. "Why, what does it mean ?—simply this : where water remains there flows perhaps a stream close by. From it water percolates—one of them has a feeder, some stream or the like; the other hasn't. That is why water has dried up. Living amidst sense objects is just like this. Sense objects are the feeders. The mind gets drowned in them. Sense objects are called Maya. That's why he advised solitude. Living away from sense objects, the inside dries up—all dross falls off, the mind gets crystallized and in the crystallized mind He is seen.

"Thakur used to say : A sadhu, a sannyasi shall not even look at the picture of a woman. He shall not live with house-holders. Sights and scenery provoke a desire for creature comfort in the mind—this is the reason. He who desires God, such a sadhu lives alone, not with anybody.

"Sitting on the same bed with a house-holder, sleeping under the same mosquito-net is not proper. This drags the mind down. The sadhus of Western India do not let householders sit on the same *asana*, lest as a result of their company, the mind should get polluted; that's why. In this they are not at fault. This rule is for the good of both.

"They who are beginners have to live with great discrimination. One has to live through everything saying, 'not this, not this.' In the beginning total renunciation. After God has been realized, one may enjoy. But at first complete renunciation. For beginners, uncompromising renuncia-

tion. Nachiketa did not accept anything. Yama said, 'Have a kingdom.'—'No, sir,'—'wife, son, long life?' Even to this the same reply, 'No sir. I want nothing. Only the knowledge of the Self, just this I want.'

"*Shreya* and *preya* are two things. *Shreya* alone is to be sought. *Shreya* means God; *preya*, sense enjoyments. That is why Nachiketa asked for *shreya*, not *preya*.

— "Who can enjoy? He who has completely renounced all, and who has seen God. Before this, all has to be renounced. In the *Yoga-Vasishtha* it is said :—Kach was plunged into the *Nirvikalpa samadhi* for a long time. Then he brought his mind down. He was asked, 'What do you see?'—He resides in everything like warp and woof,' this was his reply. All is He. Thakur also said, 'After this stage there is no harm in enjoyment.' Then enjoyment is no longer enjoyment.

"In the *Panchavati*, a dog came to Thakur. Immediately he thought : Mother might speak something through its mouth. Mother in all.

"After a lot of trouble if one climbs up the terrace one can then tell what is going on below. At first one has to take the trouble. After *samadhi*, all is He—this knowledge dawns."

M (To the bhaktas)—According to the Hegelian philosophy it is He who pervades all. This is certainly borrowed from the translations of our Veda and Vedanta. It has exponents in America too. They take it to mean : Since God pervades all, enjoy the world as much as you can. (Everybody laughs) They, of course, do not know how this truth was discovered. To them all this is a borrowed idea. In the beginning how much of renunciation had to be practised. It was only then that the rishis of this country said this after realising God. त्यागेनके अमृतत्वमानसुः  
—Through renunciation alone God, the Image of the Life

Everlasting can be realised. If renunciation is not complete He cannot be attained. Sadhus and beginners have to renounce all. Complete renunciation and surrender unto Him.

"Thakur used to say : There are three kinds of men in this world. One type those who ask for nothing at all—only God they want, only yoga. They are first class—for example Shukadeva. The other type, those who want yoga and bhoga both. They are also good. Many great bhaktas belong to this class, for example, the Pandavas. There is yet another group wanting bhoga only. They do not want God. This group predominates. There (at Mihijam), during my stay of a few months I noticed that animals have but one desire, that of enjoyment. Cow and buffalo, dog and cat—all these are busy with food day and night. Their only activity is eating, sleeping and procreation. Between this group of men and animals there is but little difference. In human body only can one meditate on God if one chooses—there is this little difference only.

"Under a canister, lives a frog. No sooner do I lift the tin than one of its two young ones escapes. Lest I should kill the other, the mother immediately springs up and keeps lying upon it. (Stretching his hand) In this, it is His hand I noticed. It is He who protects them stretching His hand. One day, I lift the kid of a goat up in my lap. The mother comes bemoaning, and stands close by. At any other time make a sound and she would run away. Today, she stands close by—neither moving nor fearing. All these precious things I saw there this time. Unless one goes to such places, these things cannot be understood. These Vedas and Shastras, have they been written sitting in a place like this ? No, they were written in solitary plains and forests like that (Mihijam). *Aushadhi*, *banaspati*—herbs and trees and the like that find mention in the holy books do not grow in cities. His hand is there on all—this I have seen this time. Those who

O Mother Kali, Do not delude me any longer with sense-pleasures.'

M absorbed in contemplation, listens to the music. Now surcharged with emotion he speaks on God.

M (To the bhaktas)—Thakur said, "Is music a trivial thing ? By weeping and singing in a secluded place secretly with an intense yearning one sees God. Ramprasad saw." In Kashipore garden, in the last stage he said, "Ma is transforming me. Now no more you and I ; all I see is She." No more the attitude of the served and the server; everything is 'the served'. Karmas have been reduced. Now the Lila is to end—therefore this stage. His dance and music and the constant 'Thou, the Ma; I, the son' of his earlier days are no more. All calm and quiet. A few days later he left his mortal frame.

Jiten the Elder enters the room in the meanwhile. He has heard 'now no more you and I, all I see is She.' That's why he is putting the question—to understand better.

Jiten the Elder (To M)—Sir, how to get rid of this 'I' ? How restless its fire has made me ? Here itself I have heard: 'the unripe I', 'the ripe I' and also 'jiva-koti,' 'Ishwara-koti.' What are all these ? Please make me understand for once.

M (To Jiten)—Thakur used to say, The 'I' of the jiva simply does not go. The *Ishwarkotis*, for example the avataras and others can get rid of their 'I'. "Since the 'I' of the jiva does not go let the blighter stay then as the servant-I", Thus he spoke. Again he said, "The jiva is like the Ashwattha tree—out it today, tomorrow again it would shoot out. The avataras and the like are like the radish plant, it comes out along with its root—the 'I' does not last."

"I a man, I a learned man, wise, I the son of so and so, of such and such caste—this is the unripe 'I'."

I the servant of God, a devotee, I His child and so on, this feeling or I and He are one—this is the ripe 'I'. Thakur used to say, The 'I' of a bhakta, the servant-I is good. It is the scoundrel-I that is so wicked—the 'I' that says day and night, I am so and so, such and such. When the 'I' of the jiva would not go, what else to do? —to attach the 'I' to Him : I-His servant, I-His child."

M (To the bhaktas)—It's He who does all. These different natures of men, these too He has made. The caste-system of yours was based on this very fact of nature. That's why Krishna said to Arjuna : Your merely saying 'no' will not do. You are a Kshatriya; in your nature is ingrained war. You will have to do it, but then do it with an unselfish motive; without hankering after its fruit. Do it unattached, wholly surrendering the fruit to Me. तत् कुरुष्व मदपेक्षम्

IX : 27—This path He showed. (After a momentary silence) So irresistible is the course of Prakriti or Nature. This power is also His gift. It is His Maya—Shakti that engages the men in different pursuits. There (in Mihijam), I used to see, Bird and animal, cow and buffalo, cat and dog—all being moved by this power of Nature. I noticed animals—they were eating the whole day since morning. At leisure even, they were chewing the cud and in between that also going on—reproduction, the attempt to procreate. Eating and eating—this is the nature of the jiva. Everything is alike between them and man, except the divine potentiality. It is only in the human body that God can be invoked; in other bodies it is generally not possible. Inside our human frame there are three bodies, you know, the gross, the subtle, the causal and beyond it the great cause, that is God. The causal body is the spiritual body which Thakur called the '*bhagavati tanu*'. It is only man who can think on this spiritual body.

Jiten the Elder (humbly)—We hear it daily but where is the power to comprehend? How to do it—gradually getting entangled more and more—what is the way out?

M (at once)—Ways he has told us all. So many times in so many ways. But where do men try to carry them out ? Mani Mullick, the elderly Brahman bhakta would go to Thakur, listen to everything and in between ask him questions : ‘Sir, what is the way ? New persons, new sadhus, all asked him the same question at every meeting : What is the way ? The way, that has been told by Thakur so many times but who listens ? Every word he spoke is a mantra. Is it that a mantra has only to be in Sanskrit— why not in Bengali ? The Veda, the Vedanta, all is there in it. But who listens ? Let one live with a single word of his ! He used to say, ‘You should call upon Him in the forest, within the mind and in a corner.’ Let me live up to just this teaching.

“Many are the men there. To whom shall I say ? Who does ? His very descent is for this—सम्भवामि युगे युगे (Gita IV : 8)—I come down from age to age. Why ? To raise the bhaktas. When the bhaktas sink too low then only He comes to raise them and to straighten their path. How easy has it been made this time ? How low has He come down ! Has he not said : Keep the company of the sadhus, pray, live in seclusion, go on pilgrimage and so on. He has come down so low : Living for just three days in solitude would do, said he. It means that in three days a taste will be developed. Later on, the mind would want to go of its own accord. In so many ways Thakur showed the way but who follows ? Do people act simply when advised ? Nature, you see, keeps pulling them back. Do worldly people have any sense of shame ? Plunged in sense enjoyment they have become completely shameless like dogs and cats.

“When He wills, it can be quite otherwise. From this very mud blossoms forth the lotus flower.

“Keshab Babu said to those who visited him (Sri Ramakrishna), “Don’t go there (to Dakshineswar) so often.

Visit now and then, otherwise you would be bitten imperceptibly one day." In other words, you would be made to renounce all for the realization of God. When Thakur was told of it, he replied : 'Why ! Do I tell them to renounce the world ? Do this as well as that—do both, *yoga* and *bhoga*. Holy Father ! Where is the escape if Calcutta people are told to renounce all ? Now do both. In future let it be what will be. If one has to renounce later on, one will of one's own accord.' In spite of Thakur's saying it in so many words how many are listening ? Prakriti is dragging them in the opposite direction."

## 2

H M (To Shukalal)—Thakur used to say, Formerly all men had faith. The master leaving the minor matters to the officials would meditate on God. If you attend to minute details where is the leisure ? If you leave the responsibility on them may be that a hundred rupees more are spent. There are some again who go with the servant to the bazar with a basket. Perhaps they will bring greens and vegetables worth a paisa or two. To save money they go to the bazar. May be that he will pinch a few paises. Wretch ! are two pice the price of God ? They are engaged only in this day and night. How can there be leisure, then ? Do you follow ? His advice is : Leave the responsibility on the officials and the rest of the time repeat His Name. He would even say this : The rishis and munis of yore worshipped Him day and night and yet they could not realise Him. And how can a worldly man calling on him leisurely realise Him ? It's not so simple.

“(To a youngman)—Those who have no money possibly may not have time. They have wife and children; they have to be fed by earning but those who have no

anxiety for their food or clothing, why don't they do ? Can you tell, sir ? Even they say : Here is so much wealth and possessions. If I do not look after it who would ? Thakur asked Mukherji when he had been absent for a few days: Why did you not come ? He replied, 'Sir, I have to look after everything—house and buildings, wealth and possessions.' But he has neither son nor daughter. What a wonder ! So much of leisure, no anxiety for bread, even then it cannot be done !

M (To the bhaktas)—Has he not shown us the way, but who acts ? 'If He is called on with a sincere heart He would do everything,' said he. Seeing one day that there was nobody else in the room, he said to one of the bhaktas (M), "There is nobody else here. So I tell you : By calling on Him with a sincere heart He will do everything." and on many more occasions he said the same thing : 'If one is sincere all will come about.' (After thinking for a while) Babu Ram said to Thakur, when the latter had asked him to stay with him at Dakshinেশ্বর : 'Why don't you bring me here ?' He had said it from the core of his heart, so he became a sadhu. So many times has Thakur said, "I swear unto you whosoever will think on me shall inherit my wealth even as a son does inherit his father's wealth." Knowledge and devotion (Jnana-bhakti), discrimination-dispassion (viveka-vairagya), love and realization of God (prema-samadhi)—all these his wealth.

"One should cry with a yearning heart and pray. He said, "When I used to cry many people would assemble there and console me saying : You will realise". He had gone through great hardships, you know. And in his own life all this happened.

"If one calls on Him with a sincere heart He reduces one's karma ; when karma is reduced yearning for God appears. As soon as yearning comes all is achieved. Thakur

used to say : Just as the dawn is followed by sunrise, in the same way yearning is followed by His vision. Reduction of karma means the end of sense enjoyments. If He is to be moved one has to pay the fees—just as to move the court one has to pay gold coins, guineas. The fee for moving Him is the end of sense pleasures.”

## 3

M (To the bhaktas)—Why do avataras come ? To reduce karma, you see. Sri Krishna came and gave a push. He said : Whatever you do, do it without a selfish motive, do it without desiring its fruit. Being detached surrender all fruit unto me.

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

यत्तपस्यसि कीर्त्तेय, तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥

(Gita IX : 27)

मदर्पणम्—that is, do it for Me, not for yourself. Thereby, karma will not be able to bind you. Otherwise the bond of karmas is inevitable. Then came the Buddha and gave another push. Thakur has also come for the same purpose, to reduce karma. He said on oath : संभवामि युगे युगे (Gita IV : 8) that is, I incarnate myself in human-body from age to age and tell the direct path. When the condition of the bhaktas gets complicated it is only then that He incarnates. So much entangled they get that He has to come Himself. Before His appearance, people feel contented with just Vedic rituals and so on. So much of japa, such and such worship, so many days of fasting, vows, so much distance for going bare-foot—observing all such external code, do they keep busy. Yearning, the root of Dharma, a sincere desire to realise Him, this people forget. He comes and changes all this,

reduces the external activity. The inner activity—the longing—He increases. He comes and says, “Meditate sincerely on Me, take refuge in Me, I shall lead you on the straight path quickly. He shows the way lest one gets entangled in new work. When the avatara comes it is a great chance. He simplifies everything, leads on to the shortest cut.

“And another thing Thakur used to say : All this work necessary for the management of the world, She winds up at the end of each *kalpa* (cycle). Now everything quiet. He used to say : Mother has a pot for miscellaneous articles. She stores all seeds in it. (To Jiten the Elder) Haven't you seen housewives keeping all seeds of cucumber, seeds of pumpkin, dried sea-foam—all these they store in the pot. It is the same. And when She wills She scatters all these seeds throughout the universe—all Her ideas. What a majestic plan ! Externally it seems as if the world is automatic. But it is not so. Everything moves as She wills. By understanding this the problem is almost solved. Whenever and in whatever state one has to live, one can live in joy. At Her sign all is moving—forgetting this is the cause of all sorrows. He the engineer, man the machine. (To Jagabandhu) This solar system you see, by which we live then comes to an end. This sun, the Neptune, the Uranus, the Ursa Minor, which are performing such a lot of work will all calm down at the end of the *kalpa*. (To himself) And what an intelligence He has given to man ! Men of science have brought to light quite a few facts—the distance of the sun from the earth, its shape, that Neptune goes round the Sun once in every thousand and a half years—all these facts are being confirmed by intellect. With one drop of intellect all this; what with His all-pervading intellection ! Have you understood anything, Jiten Babu ? See the Ursa Minor—they revolve round the pole-star. Revolving day and night, they make four right angles.”

M keeps silent for some time. Again, he picks up the former threads :

M (To the bhaktas)—The avatara comes to simplify everything. Christ said, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you' (Matthew—7:7)—Ask Him with a sincere yearning, make restless efforts, He will certainly fulfil your mind's desire, reveal Himself. Christ showed this straight way—the way of prayer. Now Thakur came and said the same : 'Ask him sincerely. He will do all. You will not have to worry.' Christ was unlettered, Thakur was also almost the same. About Christ, many great Doctors of Theology would say wonderingly, 'Is not this the carpenter's son ? Whence then hath this man all these things ? Never man spake like this man for he taught them as one having authority.' Then He was only twelve years old. Beside Thakur too, many learned pundits remained just earth-worms, the world-renowned would sit with folded hands before him. When the avataras say anything the world is struck with wonder.

## 4

What is M thinking ? Again he starts the conversation.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Brahman comes from the root *briha*, a big thing. जन्माद्यस्य यतः, so it has been said. From which the world is born, sustained and destroyed, that is named Brahman. He Himself does all and then winds up all. Out of Him everything springs, in Him it re-enters. He puts away karmas—like the spider. He weaves the web and then twines the threads at the end of a *kalpa*. And again He weaves. This goes on for ever. There is no stop. When He begins a new creation, He

calls for the cooperation of all. Shukadeva in deep samadhi. He calls him forth—for he had to read out the Bhagavata, His own story to the world. Here no non-cooperation. In His work, all have to cooperate, have to be companions of His Leela. While a new home is being set up everybody has to take to karma (work.)

“What else is karma ? To take up a body is called the karma. Body means karma. Lust, anger and so on—what are all these ? They themselves engage one in karma. Samadhi is the normal state of the jiva, karma is its opposite. Samadhi and karma, two extremes.”

Jiten the Elder—Sir, how are karmas to be reduced ? They are increasing from day to day ?

M.—Listen to the Doctor. Obey Thakur. He used to say : (There is) A housewife. She has conceived. It is her sixth month. The mother-in-law reduces her household duties. In the seventh month, it is reduced a little further. Eighth and ninth months, it is almost reduced completely. In the tenth month, it is reduced to nil. When the child is born she plays only with it. The more one advances in one direction the farther away one goes from the other. As one advances towards Him the karmas gradually get renounced. In samadhi, they are totally renounced, completely. Thereafter some karmas remain just for maintaining the body—for example, bathing, eating, answering the call of nature, sleeping. And some others remain for teaching humanity—for example, jnana, bhakti, singing His name and praise and so on. There is a beautiful illustration in Vivekchuramani : in what manner the karma lingers after God-realisation. A child of five goes to sleep. The mother gets late in the kitchen. The mother takes up the sleeping child in her arms to feed. The child throws about its limbs but the mother does not loosen her grip. Then she feeds it but it does not accept.

Then, she forces food into its mouth. What to do?—forced as it is, it eats indifferently. This is the picture of karma after samadhi—there is no sense of doership; one acts with perfect detachment. There is another variety of karma which has to be done in the state of sadhana—selfless work. On surrendering oneself to the guru, he makes one renounce action while keeping him in action—he makes him perform work without attachment. While performing selfless work, karma comes to an end. Then he does not let one get entangled in new work. Till the assembled karmas of the past (the *prarabdha*) do not get exhausted, he makes one work without the desire for fruit—in order to conquer nature—for the sake of God—not for gaining heaven.

“God has now incarnated in human form. He has reduced the karmas of the bhaktas in the capacity of a Sat-Guru. He is well aware which pot contains what. As is one's nature so is the karma to which one is engaged to end the bhoga. He is getting him to do everything with an attitude of detachment so that yearning for Him comes at last. If one does not succeed now, it is to be understood one is unlucky. A big chance, everything fresh !

“Why did the gurus of yore give different kinds of advice to different disciples ? Since natures are different, that's why. To one person they would say, “Embrace sannyasa” to another they would say, “Live the life of a brahmachari for some time.” To one they would say, “Go on pilgrimage for a while”, to another, “Live with me and serve me”, and to yet another, “Go and enjoy worldly life.” Different natures, so different paths. Destination just one, God. One is saved by putting one's faith in the word of the guru. By surrendering to Him, He Himself makes you work, holding you by the hand. At the end, He makes you renounce action altogether. After

renunciation of action, all silence. The bee was humming. As soon as it sat on the flower, no more sound, lost drinking honey. Till God is seen there is work. After realisation, all quiet."

Jiten the Elder—Coming down as a guru, it is true, God has shown the way to reduce work. But has one to reap the fruit of all accumulated karmas of the past ?

M—If He so wills everything is possible. By taking refuge in Him everything becomes possible. Even the accumulated karmas get destroyed—by His will. If He couldn't do so how would He be omnipotent ? But one has to surrender to Him. Balmiki and Vishwamitra had their past karmas destroyed. Everything is happening by His will. The general rule, the special rule—both are there. The general rule is to reap the fruit of the past karmas. The special law : His will, His grace. (To Jagabandhu) King's prerogative, isn't it ? At a sign from whom this wonderful world is moving, can He, if He so wills, not pardon his bhakta's all ? Thakur would sing Ramprasad's song to say this very thing : 'If what fate has written on the forehead must happen who would call on Thy Name, O Durga ?' Exception proves the rule.

यं यं कामये तं तमुग्रं कृणोमि ।

तं ब्रह्माणम् तमृषि तं सुमेधाम् ॥

Just see, the Veda says : By His will, one attains brahmanhood, rishihood. Thakur would dance and sing sometimes a song. M began to sing inspired—

'Mother ! If I die with the name of Durga on my lips I shall see, O Shankari, how thou shalt not redeem me ! If I kill the cow and the knower of Brahman or destroy the child in the womb,

If I indulge in drinking wine and the like or kill  
woman—

For all these sins I care not the least, for I can get  
at the feet of Brahman in a moment,

Only if I die saying 'Durga' 'Durga' on my lips.'

Calcutta, 11th May 1923 A.D.

28th of Vaishakha 1330 (Bengali year)

Friday, the 11th day of the Dark Fortnight.

# SIMPLE LIFE, AID TO SPIRITUAL LIFE

## 1

Saturday today. After-noon. On this day, many a bhakta meets. Already a party of bhaktas has arrived from Entally: Lalit of Bhatpara, Shukalal, Doctor, Shanti, Jagabandhu, Rakhal, Amulya the Elder and Yogen have come. Within a short time enter Ramesh Brahmachari, Vinay and Jiten the Younger. M, seated on the floor is enquiring after the welfare of the bhaktas. In the meanwhile, 'the Agarpara boy' of the Kathamrita comes in. Ashu Babu is no longer the boy of yore, he is old. M makes him sit beside him with great respect and talks to him in a happy mood. At the desire of M, the bhaktas begin to sing. It is half past six—

'A new person has arrived. Come along if you wish to see him. I say, two bags of viveka and vairajna (discrimination and dispassion) are always hanging from both of his shoulders.'

Ramesh Brahmachari sings—

'Sing, O' friend, Victory ! Victory to Ramakrishna's name !

All sing :—

Victory to Ramkrishna, sing O' my mind, sing Ramakrishna.

He who is the Avatara of the Age, Narayana Absolute, Brahman.'

At the end of the song, at the desire of M, Amulya.

the Elder reads out a few passages from the Biography of Thakur while he was practising spiritual disciplines. Now, M begins to talk.

M (To the bhaktas)—Thakur used to say : 'By treading all the different paths, I have seen, where I am at present is the best. *Sa, re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni*,—one cannot stay at *ni* for long. It is better to rest lower'. To be at *ni* is the state of the brahman-jnani (Knower of Brahman). Bhakti and bhakta—beautiful ! To stay in the state of samadhi for long is not possible. There are many other creeds too : the Sahajya, the Ghoshpara, the Kartabhaja—so many ! But this path is good, a pure path. On those paths too, a few have succeeded, but very dirty paths. One can enter the house from the main gate and also through the privy. All these paths, as if it were, entrances through the privy. I have the maternal approach. Some people have adopted sex approach, *prakriti bhava*, and pleased Her through intercourse but it is a dirty path. For me, She is only the mother creatrix.

"Had he not come who would have told us all this ? Who would have pointed out this distinction ? Who has such a many-sided vision ? Lucky for us that we came at this time. So we were able to hear this priceless talk. Had he not come who could have settled the controversies of the world ? Everybody calls his religion great. He said : All religions are true. I have verified it by practising, sadhana. Every religion is a particular path. At the end, they all converge in God. That's why the song says : 'Aqua, water, pani, vari, with various names the same water is called. Allah, God, Christ, Moses, Kali are names given by differing creeds'. This religious integration came about only by his coming. By practising sadhana in his own life, he verified that they are all true. That's why he said so.

"But the main purpose of his coming is to lift the

bhaktas. They get so entangled that he has to come to raise them. He has care for everything but for bhaktas he has special anxiety. Reason: Seeing the bhaktas, people would learn, would call upon Him. Thence results peace. One day, all the bhaktas were seated in Dakshineswar. Most of them were young boys. To Tej Chandra he said, "For you alone all this worry—those of you who have got married. You are yourself sinking; to add to it you have the burden of so many round your neck." Just see, how much care God has for those who have married. Their case is complicated, you see. That's why so much of anxiety. One finds no path for oneself, to add to it one has to guide so many immature minds, to lead those who have to their credit neither discipline nor prayer. Those who have got stuck up in the world are cared for more by Him."

Jiten the Elder—"This is my greatest sorrow, O Mother, that in spite of you, I am being robbed in my awakened house."

M (interrupting excitedly)—Thakur used to say: Why such songs again and again? Once or twice, sufficient. Sing happy songs of His name, form, divine play, all these. For example, 'Krishna's flute is being heard on the Yamuna. Who amongst you will go there? Come.' Trouble and sorrow—these have to be there when living in the world. On taking up a body, sorrow is inevitable. These joys, sorrows, struggles come from Him. Thereby alone people will wake up. There are infinite jivas in His world. Man is one among them. Why has He made man?—For, he would call upon Him. Struck by sorrows and troubles, awakening will come and he will call on Him—then alone peace. That's why he asked for songs of joy to be sung.

Jiten the Elder (humbly)—Why did then Ramprasad sing these songs of sorrow and pain?

M—But did Ramprasad only express his own sorrow in his songs ? He is a type of man, an ideal man; he has expressed the sorrow and misery of humanity in such songs. He is a representative man. And then mark, he says just after these sad songs : ‘Come O mind, let us go out for a walk under the wish-yielding tree of Kali’. By repeating sorrow and sorrow, sorrow will not quit. By repeating His name, meditating on His word, seeing Him, all sorrows are done away with. That’s why instead of singing songs of sorrow, one should sing the songs of His name, form and *leela*, songs of joy. By repeating disease, disease, disease will not leave. One has to listen to the doctor’s advice; medicine will have to be bought and taken, then only a cure will result. Sorrow and pain are diseases of worldly existence. To get rid of them one has to sing His name and praise. One has to sing happy songs. One must sing songs of pleasure, unmixed with pain—songs of happiness and joy should be sung. Then alone riddance from this disease of worldly existence, the cooling down of the fire of the three fevers.\* That’s why Thakur would always sing songs of joy, for example—‘I say, don’t deprive me of joy, You who are the embodiment of Joy Yourself.’ We should also therefore, always sing songs of joy.

“Once Thakur went to Sinduria Patti, to the house of Mani Mullick. The annual festival of the Brahma Samaj was being celebrated there. Vijay Krishna Goswami delivered a sermon and asked Thakur, “How did it go ?” Thakur said, “Beautiful ! But why do you repeat the word ‘sinner’ so frequently ? Better say : For me who repeat His name, how can there be any sin ?” And another day, he said to a person (Keshab Sen) : Why do you talk so much about His excellence (*aishvarya*): O God, You made the sun, You made the moon, You did this and You did

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\*Suffering from intra-organic, extra-organic physical and extra-organic supernatural causes.

that ? What use saying all this ? 'Repeating sin, sin, sinner, sinner, one becomes so,' he used to say. We should say : I have repeated His name, no sin for me ? *Nam-yajna* (sacrifice by repeating His name), *nam—mahatmya*, (glory of repeating His name) are both there. When once have I uttered His name all my sins have disappeared—this faith should be there. Chaitanyadeva went to Rameshwaram in the south. On his way, at the bank of the Godawari he met Rai Ramananda. Then he said to him : It has been a great pleasure to meet you. And later when I return to Puri, I shall have the joy of celebrating the festival of 'Nam' (Name) with you; repeating the name of God is the best festival. So the Vaishnavites say beautifully, 'Where is the power in man to commit more sins, they are condoned by uttering Hari's name but once'.

M (To the bhaktas)—In that country too (the West) the same talk of sin and sinner. 'And thou shalt be cast into furnace of hell fire, if you sin. Do righteous deeds and you will have redemption.' It is the country of *bhoga* you see, that's why only such talk. There (in Mihijam), a copy of Shakespeare came to my hand. After a long time, I turned its pages to read. Such a great poet and dramatist but nowhere did he say a word about the Gospel of Love, only sin, punishment, hell-fire and redemption—all such things. Materialists as they are, so they cry : punishment, punishment. Prema (pure love) is a thing belonging to this country alone. Such a great book ! Not a single line have I been able to locate wherein prema is mentioned. But Jesus knew it ; he also preached the Gospel of Love. Jesus knew what was in man. Many of his devotees, men and women, also knew this Embodiment of Love. They had understood that religion was nothing but being God, Love Embodiment. That is why Thakur also says, 'There is but one thing—the Love for Satchidananda. But they being materialistic could not accept it. The keynote of this country is : Renounce worldly enjoyment and that of that country :

Enjoy the world. So those who are after worldly enjoyment are afraid of punishment, and those who do not care for it shall of course be afraid of nothing. In this First World War so many great westerners have understood how dreadful it is to enjoy the world. That's why their eyes are rivetted towards India. They have noticed that it is they alone (the Indians) who have solved the problem of life fully.

"Shakespeare did not understand the Gospel of Love but Kalidasa understood it. Read his plays and see; all of them have been written with the highest ideal, God in view. However Max Muller did understand what is Love. In his Hibbert Lectures, defining religion, he examined all the religions one by one. At last, he took Chaitanya Deva's maxim as the basic truth. Chaitanya Deva has given this definition of religion : That which generates God's love is dharma. Max Muller is an authority on comparative religions. He has understood Chaitanya Deva. But then he essentially belonged to this country, you see !

"So long there is the desire to enjoy the world, one does not feel love for Him. At the end of worldly enjoyment comes a yearning for Him. Then one feels the desire to love Him. This is what is called Prema."

## 2

Jiten the Elder (To M)—Last time you sent a message from there (Mihijam) for leading a simple life. Without it, it is not possible to be religious.

M—How is it possible ? If day and night one is only thinking of other things how will one's love for Him develop ? This is why the less one thinks of other matters, the better it is. If time is wholly spent in eating and moving about when will one meditate on Him ? So, simple life is necessary. Bharata, which is the crest-

jewel of the world in spiritual life had this maxim at the root: Plain living and high thinking. The life of the rishis was extremely simple. That's how they could spend their whole time in meditating on God. There is but one mind, whichever side you take it, it will go. And, I saw the Santhals, this very body (they have) breaking stones throughout the day, what a hard labour! I would ask one of them what food he had taken. He would reply, "Sir, only rice". Some other would say, "Rice with starch", or "rice and beans". If they could add dal (lentils) it was a feast indeed! How strongly built they are! The city babus want this and that. Just one course less, what a catastrophe, what disappointment! If the food is not tasty but once what a wailing? Since childhood, one has got accustomed to eating a five course dinner. No sooner is there reduction than it is darkness all round. What need is there of all this—of so many courses? Already time is too short. One has to work hard throughout the day for one's family. Add to it, the chores of the kitchen, where is the leisure? Just dal and rice—how nice! And if it is offered to God it is so much the better. The rice is put on the boil (imitating japa) take to japa; when it is dal, again japa. By living in this state of mind one can always live in yoga. Otherwise, one falls from yoga. Whether cooking or eating one should always remember His name.

यत्करोषि यदन्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

वत्तपस्यसि कोन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदपंगम् ॥

(Gita IX:27)

—Food, sacrifice, charity, vows, tapasya—whatever you do, do it keeping Me as your aim. By doing so you will always be in yoga. You will not be bound by the fetters of karma—Thus spake the Lord in the Gita.

“What need of all this—of so many things ? Narendra’s father was an attorney. He died all of a sudden. They had great difficulty of food and clothing. Narendra, one day, said to Thakur, “Please tell your mother (that is, the Mother of the Universe) so that we may get rid of this trouble.” After several days, Narendra asked him whether he had spoken to the Mother or not. Thakur replied, “Yes, I did. If it is dal and rice it will be done. Only this much is possible.” What does it mean ? They whom He loves, them He does not trouble with all these different wants. For them, He arranges dal and rice from the very beginning. This arrangement for those who want God. But for those who want worldly enjoyment, it is different. Just see, the worldly man wastes all his time in eating and drinking. Doing this, how can he find time to call upon Him ? Besides he lives with others. He has also to keep them satisfied. He himself is responsible for them too. A family of five—he has to act according to their wishes. Add to it, if he remains busy with food, where is the time ? The house-holder takes all this burden knowingly on himself. In household, wife and children must be. Does it follow that one has to be mad after eating this and that. ‘Killing the soul for a mess of pottage ! To be mad after eating and drinking and not to devote one’s mind to God is killing the soul’.

“(Laughing) I was at the Jamtara Ashrama for several days. I saw a person knitting cots of sadhus. I said, “You are serving the sadhus well.” He replied, ‘No sir. They give me oil and what not; they give me food.’ So I was reminded of the story of the jackal of the time when Sita was kidnapped : Ram and Lakshman are searching for Sita. On the way they come across a jackal. Can you give any news about Sita ? asked they. The jackal replied : No Sir, I have always to remain busy with my food. Where is the time to see all

this? (Everybody laughs). The same is the condition of the householders. Eating and eating and in between creature comfort."

Amulya the Elder—If everybody were to make his life so simple, the economic condition of the country would deteriorate.

M—Yes, yes. No sooner is sannyasa mentioned than people put forward this very plea. They say : Yes sir, if all turn sannyasins how will the world last ? Who cares to listen to those words ? Is mere saying enough ? Who listens ? So much has been said but who listens ? If it is in one's nature, then alone one would : प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोजयति (To Amulya) You need not bother about it. Ask for an impossibility and excuse yourself ? It is to clarify this matter that God has to incarnate in human form. But do people listen even then ? When He comes, yearning comes along with Him. Those who have done with their bhoga come to him alone, and listening to his instruction try to follow it. Before the advent of the avatara all men are plunged in bhoga and ajnana (ignorance). He comes and tells : There is something higher than this, the Eternal Life. Even then only a few get awareness. The decline of religion is inevitable. When ignorance pervades, He incarnates. His creation, His scheme is such that decline and ignorance must come to it. Otherwise, it will not be possible for Him to come anew. On coming He says, "Renouncing worldly enjoyments take refuge in Me !" There is the latest message of Thakur—Sri Bhagavan. Thakur said : Except God, none else who can make one cross the ocean of the world. That's why he said : The guru who initiates should be taken as the very embodiment of God. Taking the guru as a human-being one will achieve nothing. One should think, Satchidananda Himself is getting me initiated through his mouth. That's why he used to say :

The main thing is the *prema* of Satchidananda. One should love him alone.

Jiten the Elder—(Disappointedly) Thy will be done !

M—An advocate of the High Court had said the same before Thakur. He was not the man who would say anything to a person just to please him. At once he replied, 'You don't have to talk big. Of what avail just saying so ? Pray sincerely. Instead of talking one should pray. If you cannot, then practise.' And he also said, 'Some one is feeling hungry. Now if he does not say so, is he not hungry ? One must pray to Him, inwardly.'

One of the bhaktas enters the room.

M (To the newcomer)—Have you understood ? Without simple life, religious life is not possible. That is why the better minds of the west have accepted Gandhi. They have understood that only he of this country has solved the problem. By leading a simple life, one does not have to be a slave for the sake of one's stomach. Nor is there so much worry for one's wife and children. As soon as life becomes simple there is a lot of advancement. Gandhi did say so but how many are accepting it ?

3

9 p.m. A pretty big marriage procession is passing through the Amherst street towards the south. All the four directions resound with the sweet and varied sound of the musical instruments and the whole atmosphere is lit up by thousands of rows of lights. M sends some of the bhaktas to witness this scene. The bride-groom wearing royal robes is seated in a peacock carriage decorated with wonderful rows of lamps, flowers and leaves. The bhaktas return after having a look.

M (To all)—Just see. It is His arrangement that he is going to enter the wordly life. Only then will the creation last. On the one hand, it is said that the world is a burning fire. Provided one is an expert athlete, one may keep himself safe to some extent. For this, one needs training. He used to say that entering the world after keeping holy company for some time, calling upon Him in solitude, and gaining bhakti is not so risky. Without obtaining bhakti, without being able to distinguish right and wrong it is difficult. But some from amongst them He pulls out and takes along. He does not engage them in the work of creation, they are made eligible for the Joy Eternal. Didn't Thakur say : He who has given up the joy of woman has renounced the joy of the world. Thereby he becomes an heir to the supreme bliss, the joy eternal, that is to say, he can realise God if he so wills. This joy of the world is also His joy. But these short-lived pleasures, now available, now no more available, today not tomorrow, are but momentary. He who has renounced these pleasures for His sake only has the right to the supreme bliss—the Bliss of Brahman. (To an unmarried bhakta) Which one—worldly joy or bliss supreme ?—You have a right to the bliss supreme.

M (To the bhaktas)—In Mihijam, I saw two marriages. In one, the bride-groom was going to marry, with an ordinary band. There was no priest either. On enquiry they said that one of the uncles was going to join the hands of the bride and the groom. And another I saw. The girl went to marry. On the death of his wife, somebody said to his elder sister, "Please get me married. Even if I have but a mat to lie on, please arrange my marriage." This is a wonderful world while one is saying good-bye, the other clings to it. By praying to Him, by tearful entreaties with a heart full of longing, by taking refuge in Him, He Himself makes everything easy within the

prevailing state—'from this very mud blossoms forth the lotus.'

CALCUTTA, 12th May 1923 A.D.

29th Vaishakha 1330 (Bengali year)

Saturday, the 12th Day of the Dark Fortnight.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA, GOD IN HUMAN BODY

Sunday today. Throughout the day, the bhaktas have been meeting. The room on the first floor of the Morton School, number 50, Amherst Street. Surrounded by Dr. Bakshi, Rakhal, Shanti, Yogen, Ramesh Brahmachari, the younger Jiten, Jagabandhu. Shukalal, Manoranjana, Nalini the Younger, Tarak, Vinay, Amrit, Nalini the Elder, Lalit the Elder, Lalit the Younger and several other bhaktas, M is seated on a mat. It is evening. The lamp has been brought in. M, saluting with folded hands, begins to meditate. After the meditation, a few songs and hymns are sung. Everybody sang this hymn of salutation : Jai-Jai Ramakrishna Nam (Victory, victory to the haloed name of Ramakrishna). Again : *Aisheche Nutan Manush dekhbi jadi aaye chale* (A new man has arrived, come along if you wish to see him). Lalit the Younger sang : *Mahadeva, parama yogin, mehtananade magan* (Mahadeva, the great Yogin plunged in the Joy Eternal). Again, all are singing at the desire of M : 'Dom ! Dim ! The damaru in the hand of Hara'—a composition of Swamiji. 'With a trident, body covered with ash, a serpent necklace round the neck, five faced, a bow in hand, Shiva, bull his mount, Bhutnath (the Lord of goblins) with a necklace of human skulls decorating his neck, time-less, immortal, naked all.'

The song has ended. Jiten the Elder has arrived in the meanwhile. Younger Lalit whispers to him, "Brother Jit, we had holy reading throughout the day. Let us not make him talk too much today." These words entered the ears of M too.

M (To Lalit)—No, not that much. The Gospel of Saint John has it at its end : 'But there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written, (St. John 21:25) It was with regard to the Christ that this thing was said by Saint John, his loving devotee. And it is also in the hymn, Shiva Mahima-stava :

असित गिरि समं स्यात् कज्जलं सिधुपात्रे । What next ?

Some bhaktas began to recite. M also joined them.

सुरतरुवर शाखा लेखनी पत्रमुर्वी ॥

लिखति यदि गृहीत्वा सारदा सर्वकालं ।

तदपि तव गुणानामीश पारं न याति ॥

M (To the bhaktas)—Taking the Himalaya as ink, the sea as inkpot, the Kalpa-tree as pen, the earth as a paper, if Sarasvati were writing since eternity, even then all Your words of praise would not be exhausted. See what a gigantic scheme this Kathamrita of his ! So the only ray of hope is स्वल्पमपि अस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ।—Whether one drinks pitcherfuls from the sea of immortality or tastes a drop with a blade of grass it is just the same, that is one shall be immortal—this is the hope. How on earth would one be tired or satiated by talking about him ?

"I was once ill and had been suffering for a month. Dr. Satyasharan Chakravarti said to the inmates of the house, "Whatever he likes to hear or do, let him. Then he will get well soon." The other doctors would not let me speak. Even then the temperature did not come down for one month. But after this prescription of Satya Babu the temperature came down and I

was soon cured. He is a bhakta, you know. So he can understand. If the word (of the Lord), my very life-breath, is not spoken or heard, how would my pulse move, you see ? It is a different department, that of God. Those who belong to it, were they not to speak or hear about Him what on earth would they live with ? They would die. Many of those who retire on pension die suddenly. Had they been working they might have survived a little longer. That is why many persons, even when pensioned off still look for jobs. Why ?—Just because they have been so accustomed. A fish lying out of water is almost dead. Put it in water and it shoots forth immediately, for it has regained its life when in water. It is the same with the talk on God. If those who enjoy hearing or speaking it don't do so, how can they survive. How will those who live the life of rishis, who live with the singing of the glories of Lord's name survive without it ? This has become their second nature—singing the glories of Lord's Name. Other talk, other sentiments they cannot stand. A mad woman used to visit Dakshineswar, a bhakta she was. She would say to Thakur : Mine the sentiment of a beloved ! One day while Thakur was taking his meals, just then she comes up. No sooner did she say : Mine the sentiment of a beloved, than Thakur cried in pain, stung as if by a scorpion and said, "I say, Ramlal, listen what she is saying : the sentiment of a beloved ! The sentiment of a beloved !" Later on when Thakur left Dakshineswar and was living at the Kashipore garden-house during his illness, one day as he was unguarded the mad woman, finding an opportunity, entered Thakur's room like a shot. Others came and turned her out. Later on, Thakur said : "Had she touched me at that time I would have immediately given up the body." Such are these mysteries ! Bhaktas, pure sattva bhaktas—by their touch the body remains. All this illness, disease is rooted in this. Many were the types of persons who used to visit him. He would refuse none. With what dirty attitudes

of mind would they come and touch him ! Therefore diseases. Otherwise why should he have diseases ?

M (To the bhaktas)—Those who belong to this department cannot live without talking of God, without holy thoughts. They are fish out of water. Once, the father of Ashwani Datt, Braj Mohan Babu of Barisal, a retired sub-judge lived with Thakur for several days in Dakshineswar. One day, after lunch a conversation was going on—a mixed casual talk—usual with people. Thakur was sitting on the smaller cot, immersed in samadhi. Coming down, he folded his hands and said : Please do not talk these things any more. Talk about God. As soon as he said so, Braj Babu joining his hands begged his pardon and said, “Master, as you have diagnosed our disease kindly prescribe the medicine also.” Those who have such a state cannot live without godly talks. Chaitanya Deva was living in Puri, immersed in samadhi. As soon as the name of God entered his ears his external senses would return. The same was seen of Thakur—in the inward state absolutely bereft of the outer senses ; no sooner was the name of God uttered than he would immediately regain his senses. The name of God is such—it enters and works within.

Jiten the Younger—Today Khoka Maharaj told me in the Math : “During the life-time of Swami (Vivekananda) and Maharaj (S. Brahmananda), Mahapurusha (S. Shivananda) would not speak so much. Now he talks so much, endlessly and he does not get tired. I should go mad were I to talk so much.

M.—No, how can one go mad when He showers His grace ? It adds to life energy. Some people used to say to Thakur : What you say about visions and so on are hallucinations. His was the temperament of a child. Just as a child tells everything to his mother, Thakur would also say to the Mother of the Universe : ‘Mother

these people call my visions etc. abnormalities.' The Mother of the Universe would reply : 'How can they be abnormal visions, my son ? Whatever you say is consistent with facts. All you say is true.' How can they be hallucinations ? It is God Himself speaking. The room was full in Dakshineswar. Thakur said : 'Behold, Mother has come. Yes, here She comes. Verily, verily I say to you, it's the Mother who has come.' And he talks to the Mother. One side of the conversation, that is, all Thakur said is audible. In so many ways, he said it; so many things he said but alas ! who wakes ?

"A certain person (Shivanath Shastri) said, 'By living always with such ideas, one would go insane. Hearing this Thakur said, 'How can it be ? By the consciousness of That which constitutes the universal, realising whom the whole world realises consciousness how can one lose one's head. By thinking of Him whose light illumines the world how can a man lose his head.' If by thinking on worldly matters a man doesn't lose his head how can he do so by thinking on universal consciousness ?

## 2

M (To the bhaktas)—If one takes refuge in the guru one can never take a false step. He always protects—always follows one. God is the Guru. But for Him there is no guru. Him Thakur called 'Ma'. When asked he would immediately reply : 'Why should I worry ? The Mother is there—she sees everything, she knows everything, she herself makes me do everything. I eat and drink and say : Ma, Ma.' Such is the guru. He is all anxiety for the bhakta, he sees everything. All right, do we think more about Him or does He think more about us ? Which one ?—It is He who thinks more of us. We don't have to think that much. Having settled this, we should sit down with a steady mind. Nevertheless what he says has to be done—japa, dhyana and so on. He heard of Vidyasagar

Mahashay, of his kindness from the mouths of people. Immediately, without caring for an invitation he called on him personally. In the myrobalan garden, a bhakta used to call on God secretly in solitude. Lo and behold ! Thakur is there. Without intimation or the like, he is there. Completely struck dumb, the bhakta, then spoke humbly : 'Whereas I should have gone to you, you have come here searching for me !' Thakur used to say : 'Just call on Him a little. Then He would come and tell you to do this and that.' That's why he would be so anxious for the bhaktas. Narendra and others not reaching there he would hire a cab, go to their houses and enquire after them. Just a few days of absence and he would go himself. Further he would also visit those bhaktas who had got married, to enquire after them. This often happened. What after all can we think about Him and how little can we speak of him ? Can a one-seer-pot contain 10 seers of milk ? We are all salt dolls—you know the story ? A salt doll, mustering great courage, went to fathom the depth of the sea. But, poor thing ! it never could return to deliver the news ! No message. He the doer, we the non-doers. We should listen to Him—should perform dhyana and japa.

"He told us so clearly; even so, do they wake up, the people ? Nothing gives us faith. Then there are degrees also of faith, said he. Some have heard about milk, some have seen it, others have drunk it. The faith by listening to the words of the guru and the shastra is one thing, after partial realization is another, then, seeing God is quite another. One has taken milk, it means one has seen Him, has conversed with Him. This is the perfect faith—the state of a *vijnani*. It was with this faith that Christ mounted the cross."

Jiten the Elder—Howsoever much one may hear about God, there is no satiety.

M—How on earth is it possible ? What a big ocean ! God is boundless. How can there be satiety ?

M again began to describe the glory of the guru.

M—(To the bhaktas)—Once a certain bhakta, roasted in the world's fire, goes to Thakur and says : 'Life is not worth living.' Thakur hears him and says : 'Why should you go to commit suicide ? What calamity has befallen you ? You have your guru. He is watching all. Is guru an ordinary thing ! Can one die just by saying so.' Thakur has said : 'By taking the guru as a man one achieves nothing.' The family gurus or others who initiate to a mantra will have to be taken as God speaking through their mouths—they being only the medium. Thakur used to say : 'This ocean of the world, only the Guru can help cross. None else can.' Guru means God.

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेताम् तरान्ति ते—(Gita VII:14)

—Only by taking refuge in Me can the curtain of the Maya be torn. There is no other way.

"I went there on my second visit. I still had the tendency to argue within me. Thakur asked me : 'Do you prefer God with form or without form ?' I said, 'God without form.' And I added : 'There is nothing at all in worshipping a clay image. Keeping Him as the aim God should be worshipped. People should be made to understand this.' These were the topics, you see, of many a lecture in Calcutta. Immediately, he silenced me by saying : 'You Calcutta people have this one fault—only lecturing. Themselves they do nothing but they make others understand.' He said : 'On this subject, you need not rack your brain. Look at this world. He sends the sun everyday. He has arranged the seasons. During rains there is water. This produces grain. Eating it, the man lives. Even before birth He has provided the mother with

milk in her breasts. All arrangements He has already made. Look at the spiritual world. Every valley has its temple, place of pilgrimage, scripture, sadhu—all these He has arranged. Those who desire this path should live with them. He is thinking of everybody. We need not think of anything. Dumb-founded I was, completely without a reply on hearing all this—no reply whatever. The argument ended for ever. Thus He is the doer and we the non-doers.

“And with what possessions do we call ourselves doers, just this body, isn't it ? But this too it is He who has given. Just see, what a beautiful system, with its digestive power, liver, spleen, nervous system—how much has He bestowed ! That is why it is called the *kalevar*, body—the best of machines. Sensual instinct, under the fire of which everybody becomes so unbalanced, that too is given by Him. Do a little labour and there is sleep. All this He does, and we say we are the doers.

“Thakur used to say to himself, How do people say : Doer, I am, the doer ? I see that all is He. But then ‘I’ is not easily got rid of. That's why the feeling of ‘I—His servant’ should be lived with. It is He who is doing all and it is He who is seeing all. A man is carrying a load. In front he sees the Kali temple. Keeping the load on his head, inclining a little he makes his salutation. God sees this also. He thinks of him also. It is possible that appearing before him He is even granting him His darshana. This body is also a load. One should sit in solitude and cry for Him secretly. Thereby His grace descends. By His grace everything is achieved—no more cares. Calling on Him, karmas are reduced. The decrease in karma decreases also (the sense of) doership. Both are relative terms.”

M (To the bhaktas)—He used to say : ‘Ma has left in me the ‘I’ of knowledge. So I am.’ I of knowledge—that

is to say, to live with singing His name and glory, bhakti, bhakta and so on. In the last state, a few days before he left this mortal frame he said in Kashipore : I look for the 'I' but can't find it. Everything I see is He. Till He wanted him to work, He retained the 'I' of the avatara. Now the work has come to an end. So He is removing it. But the 'I' of the jiva does not go. It throws up shoots like the Ashwattha tree. The avatara is like the plant of radish—it comes out along with its roots—the 'I' does not remain. That's why Thakur says : I am not able to find out the 'I'.

M (To the bhaktas)—Can we understand how great Thakur was ? He is his own equal. Only he could know himself. The same is said in the Gita स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानम् वेत्ति त्वम् पुरुषोत्तमम् । स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे (X: 13, 15) Arjun had said, 'You yourself announce yourself as God. So I believe.' and then again : अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् । (Gita IX: 11)—I am the unspent, the indestructible Self. Not understanding this, the ignorant take me to be a human being. Thakur said to the bhaktas : 'You will have to do nothing. Your visiting this place will do.' Who can say such a thing ? He himself is the Absolute Brahman—Bhagavan. He knew it himself. That's why he said so. The aim of japa and tapa is to realise Him. It is being directly realised here. Since it is so where is the necessity of all that ? Put faith in his word, and everything is done.

Overwhelmed by the unique current of this divine emotion Jiten the Elder uttered these words again today, "Thy will be done." The 'I' of the jiva cannot be got rid of but the 'servant-I' is also not coming either. Our faith in his word does not take permanent roots. Confronted with this dilemma, perhaps, Jiten Babu prayed in a voice full of dejection. But M again wields his goad today like the previous days.

M (To Jiten the Elder)—Thakur used to say : Stop this bossism. Only pray silently with a yearning heart within. What use talking aloud ? Weep secretly in solitude. 'Ask and it shall be given you : ...What man is there among you of whom if his son shall ask bread, will he reach him a stone ? ...If you then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children : how much more will your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?' (St. Matthew VII : 7, 9, 11) Christ said this. When man complies with the requests of his children will God not fulfil the desires of His devotees ? One should sincerely pray inwardly. He fulfils.

Calcutta, 13th May 1923 A.D.

30th of Vaishakha 1330 (Bengali year)

Sunday the 13th Day of the Dark Fortnight

## CHAPTER FIVE

### GOD REALIZATION—THE AIM ; LIVING LIKE THE HOUSE-MAID—THE MEANS

M is squatting on a mat on the floor. Room on the first storey of the Morton School. Besides the usual bhaktas many others have assembled. A Goswami has arrived from Khardah. Swami Sadbhavananda, the head of the Deoghar Vidyapith is also there. He is discussing a number of things regarding the Vidyapith. When the evening lamp is brought in, M stops talking and begins to meditate. Now Ramesh sings in salutation to Ramakrishna. Shanti sings: 'Why in the cremation ground, O Mother Shyama?' Arun, the grand-son of M is singing: 'Immersed in the undeterined state of samadhi of Brahman are you seated.' The hymns are over. The mind of M, it appears, is plunged in the ocean of divine emotion of Ramakrishna of the last song. He talks of him, full of emotion.

M (To the bhaktas)—Do sadhan—bhajan ever so much, the test is whether one has seen Him and conversed with Him. Just closing the eyes in dhyana a little and saying, I have attained realization, I have seen everything, would not do. In Dakshineswar a room full of persons are seated near Thakur—Vijaikrishna Goswami is also there. Thakur is saying: 'Verily, verily I say to you it's the Mother who has come.' This is the test—darshana and conversation.

Four bhaktas enter the room.

M (To the new comers)—Have you understood ? The

test of sadhan-bhajan is to see Him and converse with Him. Not in imagination, talking to Him in direct presence.

M (on the arrival of Jiten the Elder)—Do you hear, Jiten Babu? The test of sadhan-bhajan is to talk to Him in direct presence. Just closing the eyes a little and saying: I have had His darshana will not do. Seeing Him, touching Him and again talking to Him. He used to converse with the Mother of the Universe in the presence of a whole room full of people and he would affirm: Verily, verily I say to you it's the Mother who has come. One could hear everything on one side. So it was. Why did he do all this?—No, no pretence. Don't people say, 'We have had the vision of God or so and so has seen Him? That's why he made everything clear. In this age of scepticism he has shown to everybody whatever is possible. This was like a public demonstration of God, to make people believe in the existence of God, to bring Him before their eyes. The whole room is full of men. And they too of what kind? Almost all with a modern sceptical outlook, as is usual with English education. People do not want to believe soon. That is why he had to undergo such a test. There is nothing more in it. That's why Digby said, "He revealed God to weary travellers."

Attorney Bose has come.

M. —Do you hear, 'Viren Babu? A room full of men, and Vijay Goswami among them. Thakur said, 'Mother has come.' And then he started talking to Her. That's why whatever sadhan-bhajan one may do, the test lies there: Conversation after having darshana—this is called realisation.

Jiten the Elder—Yes, sir. Is it our inner-self (अन्तरात्मा) that converses?

M (laughing at him)—I say, who can tell from such a distance? All this cannot be told without entering the 'market'. From a distance only the 'ho, ho' is audible. Entering it, one can see everything, understand everything clearly. These are not matters to be talked about sitting in an armchair with a cigar in one's mouth. (Laughter).

Jiten the Elder—I got late today, in idle talk.

M—No, how can you indulge in idle talk? If one eats radish one belches radish and if one eats *rabri* (milk-sweet) one belches *rabri*. You have eaten *rabri*, it will give out eructations of *rabri*.

Jiten the Elder (with humility)—You never accept anybody's service. Seeing this I am also trying to practise the same a little. I have told my wife, I myself shall do everything.

M—O no, not this. You have not understood what is *seva*. *Seva* means—that God is inside everybody, we have to serve Him ourselves, not allow others. This is for one's own benefit. Do I serve myself? The best among bhaktas see that God is present everywhere. That's why they respect all jivas and serve them. They see God within, so they themselves serve Him. People do not have pure minds, so they cannot see God is all. Sri Krishna, therefore, chose a few big ones: for example, the Ashwattha tree, the Himalayas, the moon, the sun & the sea. These have greater manifestation of Him.

(To a bhakta) "Close your eyes or do whatever, the test (of God realization) is that alone: Conversing—seeing touching and talking.

14th of May 1923 A.D.

31st of Vaishakha 1330 (Bengali year)

Monday, the 14th Day of the Dark Fortnight

## 2

The next day, M is again seated with the bhaktas on the floor of the same room. Today is the first of the month. So, many bhaktas have come. Now after prayers, hymns are being sung. Rakhal is singing: 'O the bee of my mind, Steep thyself in the lotus of the feet of Ramakrishna.' Another person sings: 'You are the very Brahman, O Ramakrishna, you are Krishna, you are Rama.' M has caught cold. Having engaged the bhaktas in the reading of the Kathamr̥ita, he goes to the second floor to take his meals. Dr. Bakshi is reading: The stay of Mani (M) in the house of the guru. It is half past eight. M returns and sits among the bhaktas.

Doctor (reading)—Sri Ramakrishna said : The play of the Lord, the divine play ; the play of man, the wordly play. In the play of man, He is the avatara. Play of man, do you know what it is? Like the water of a big roof spouting in large quantities through the rain-pipe. Satchidananda Himself, His own power is coming out of a channel, a pipe. Only Bharadwaja and others, some twelve rishis could recognize Ram Chandra as an avatara. Everybody cannot recognize the avatara.

M (To the bhaktas)—God has to come down as an avatara, to teach jnana and bhakti—and to explain the scriptures. Before His coming, the meaning of the scriptures gets corrupted. Sri Krishna came and propagated in the Gita the essence of all the scriptures. Gita is the essence of all the scriptures. Everything in the Gita is true. Thakur had said : 'Every word in the Gita is true. Not a dot can be altered.' Many people say, "there are many interpolations in the scriptures", but about Gita he (Thakur) declared : Everything correct. Unless God comes, who can make us understand the scriptures? It is not within the competency of the learned. With-

out practising sadhan—bhajan how can one be aware of the meaning ?

“What can scriptures do alone ? There is no God in them. In the beginning one has to look into them a little. Thereafter practice (sadhana). It is for imparting training in sadhana that the avatara comes. ‘Come with a sincere longing, Practise the import of the scripture’, so he says. And those who are to be the teachers of men, for them it is necessary to know different scriptures. Vivekananda just used to quote authority in that country (the West): Kant says this and Hegel says that. Otherwise, people don’t accept.

“Only he can explain the scripture who is beyond the three gunas—wearing colourless glasses. It was so with Thakur. Also with Sri Krishna. Otherwise, put on red glasses and you will see everything red. Blue or yellow, whichever the glass you wear, you see that very colour. One’s own feelings give the colour. The Gita is found to contain absolute meaning. Since Thakur has said, ‘Gita is all true’—it is a gospel truth.

A Bhakta—Sir, how should one live in the world ?

M—Like the maid-servant in the house of a rich man. This is how Thakur had replied to a certain bhakta. ‘My Hari, my house,’ all this the maid-servant says while she goes on doing all house-hold work. But her mind remains attached to her hut in her village, to her sons and daughters. In this way, one has to do all in the household, but with the mind fixed in God.’

“‘You will live like a tartoise in the world,’ this also he said. The tartoise lays its eggs on the bank. Itself it lives in water but its mind remains attached to its eggs.

“‘One should live like an unchaste woman’, this also

said Thakur. The unchaste woman performs all household work but her mind remains fixed on her paramour. In the same way, to attend to everything in the world but to know in one's mind that only God is one's own.

"Live in the world like the mud-fish. It lives in mud but its body is glossy—not a speck of mud on it.

"And he used to say: 'One should break the jack-fruit after rubbing oil on the hands. Then the sticky substance will not smear.' Living in the world, with jnana and bhakti gained, there is no more danger.

"The fundamental thing is: Fixing the mind on God, do every thing. Having performed sadhan-bhajan secretly in a nook for some time and having gained bhakti, go to the world, live in family. Thus, no harm will come. Then the world is no longer world.

"Thakur used to say: 'Just as the leech loosens its hold on applying lime, similarly lust, anger and attachment fall by themselves after gaining bhakti. It may be difficult all right but practice would make it easy. One should pray to Him, secretly in solitude. And one should keep the company of the holy—and at times live in solitude—all these ways he told us."

A Bhakta—After hearing and understanding all this, why does one go wrong while acting ?

M—This is divine tact.—this is called Maya. His creation itself is not safe without this.

"For the sustenance of the creation, for His leela this has to happen. Without errors and illusions how can the world go on ? Every thing realizing Brahman, how will the creation last ? His scheme is such that there has to be ignorance. Surrendering unto Him is the remedy. On taking refuge in Him, He no more binds one to the world ; then there is no error.

"Everybody is after all living in ignorance. One sees that only by chance one or two get over this ignorance.

Look at the people what they do. Since morning (they are) after making money; food, rest and procreation they are busy with. How many are longing for God? I used to see goats in Mihijam. They would come out with their kids teach them how to browse and use their horns for self-defence—The mothers. What an affair!

“If in the scheme of the world there is no ignorance how can He come down? When evil thoughts prevail too much, He comes only then—संभवामि युगे युगे (Gita 4:8). Errors and illusions shall be there—One has to know this and put up with it. This is why the gods sing the hymns of the goddess:

या देवी सर्वभूतेषु भ्रान्ति रूपेण संस्थिता,

नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमस्तस्यै नमो नमः ।

He himself has created illusion and He himself has shown the way to peace. मायेव येऽपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते । (Gita 7:4)—Having taken refuge in Him one gets rid of this error and illusion. Thakur used to say: The Mother removes the veil and then one has the vision of Her face. Error and illusion vanish only then.

## 3

A bhakta has returned today from the Uttarakhand. He has visited Rishikesh, Swargashrama, Haridwar, Kan-khal, and other holy places and visited sadhus. M is seeing, touching, and taking the Ganga water of the holy Brahmakund and also the prasada along with the bhaktas, and is listening with great eagerness about the land of tapas and mahatmas. As he listens, he is completely losing himself. Whenever he hears that some one is going to Uttarakhand, M is overwhelmed with joy. And when some one returns, he feels as if some near and dear one has come back from his own home. Then he hears about

the sadhus, the holy places, the temples and the Himalaya in every minute detail. If somebody has lived in the Himalayas, M calls him the son of a great family. He says that the Uttarkhand, has been guarding the spiritual wealth of Bharata accumulated through the ages, like the wealth of Yaksha, in its bosom. To him who asks it gives freely. And how much merit just in visiting it, not to speak of those who live there and meditate on God ! Living there with the intention of worshipping God, secretly in solitude, that is what he describes; it is a sight for the God's to see. Today, there is no other talk in the assembly of bhaktas at M's. No other thought. The Himalaya, the Ganga, sadhus, holy places, tapovanam, tapasya—these holy words are sounding and resounding.

The evening lamp is brought in. After a short meditation the topic of Uttarakhand is resumed. There is a letter in M's hand. He brings it up to touch the forehead. It is written by a sadhu from Haridwar.

M (To the bhaktas)—You see, this is the prasada from the holy. What they give with pleasure is prasada. This sadhu gave up his household two and a half years ago; he used secretly to keep the company of the sadhus. He had no money, was just a young man. He used to visit this place, the Math, the Udbodhan and such other places all on foot. His house must be more than five miles away from here. Three persons used to come, two of whom have become sadhus. Thakur's maths and ashramas are coming up one by one and the boys are being trained. Oh how serious, a whole-hearted longing for God ! Now he has become a sannyasin. And the letter he has written, how devoid of pride ? This is a concrete example. Discussion on these matters reduces itself to an academic discussion. But this is a practical life. He has given up all wordly desires and pleasures—only wants God. And how he writes, '...so that I may be able to

realize Him in this very life, so that I may be able to lead the life of a true sadhu.' The way I saw him—in the mid-day sun he would come on foot, perspiring all over, with flowers consecrated to Mother Kali in his hand. Had it not been so could he be go serious ? न हि कल्याण कृत् कश्चित् दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति । Can God help granting him spiritual good ?

Jiten the Elder enters the room. The room is packed to capacity with bhaktas—all are surrounding M.

M (To Jiten the Elder)—Today, a voice has reached us from Uttarakhand. Thakur himself has sent it for us to hear—for our training. Ah ! The like of it will never happen. What an ideal ! I want You, and You alone, nothing else—Holding on to this ideal, it cannot but come about.

"That is why Thakur used to say : 'Those who have not married have a great chance.' (Drawing a line with his index finger in the void) Here is a line. On this side of it is animality, humanity, all this. Cross it and it is godhood. The line is that of wordly enjoyment. No sooner does one give up wordly enjoyment than it is godhood. He has done this.

"And those who have married have a great chance too, as the avatara has come down now. He has shown the direct path. By taking to it, it will be done. They get the light in bits, slow but sure. But those who have not entered the householder's life are as if standing in the open field—in full flood of light. That is why he said to Keshab Sen, "Living in the house, you get light from a chink but cannot stand in the open. Abundance of light there."

both worlds. But I have not been able even to obey him.

M—Thakur said to a bhakta: 'So much of anxiety for you (I have) since you have married. For those who are not married I don't have to think so much.' Just see, God worries also for those who are married. More of worry, so he says this. Their case is complicated, isn't it? With a load on the head, one salutes Mother Kali, twisting the body. For such a man Mother worries more. Another, with a cigar to his lips, a stick in his hand, gives a slight nod seeing Her (image) in front—he too is a bhakta of a kind. One should try to cling to Her. That being done, the rest She will do Herself—'You who get the elephant stuck in mud and the lame cross the mountain'. If he cannot straighten a complicated, a difficult case how is he an avatara? Taking refuge (in Him) one frees oneself even from the uncrossable Maya.

M (To the bhaktas)—Bhoga is seen even in the highly spiritual men. Renunciation of bhoga is called sannyasa. It is possible even within the household. Difficult it is but God willing it comes. I have seen, there are some such people. What if they have not taken the gerua? The gerua is nothing more than a sign-board—they live in the family, yet have renounced bhoga. Such great men are also there. Thus they have a chance now. The reason—the avatara has come now. He makes them renounce bit by bit. And those who have not married, well, they are standing in the wide open—in full flood of light.

"There was a little desire for bhoga in the nature of a bhakta. Thakur made him renounce it bit by bit. He had married. In between, he would send him home. And at mid-night he would pray to the Divine Mother: 'Mother, don't let him sink'. On the one hand, he would send him home, on the other he would press the button. He was fond of fishing. Thakur said: 'Keep contact

with so and so. Then He would let you fish.' Even if a little karma, a little bhoga is left over, the guru will get it done. In the end, it is complete renunciation."

Shukalal—Sir, there is no end to bhoga—endless. One follows the other. How can it end ?

M—But God is holding you—the guru is always holding you from behind. Did that bhakta himself indulge in bhoga ? No, Thakur got it done. Why?—To have no future anxiety. If the guru holds, there is no more fear. For example, a child is eating. The mother knows how much will fill him and how much will make him ill. As soon as he has had his fill, she removes.

"It is God who worries more for us. How much do we worry for Him? (To the bhaktas) Do we think more or does He ? Which one?—It is He who thinks more. It is He who can make the lame cross the mountain. Another bhakta was going to commit suicide on account of the rough and tumble of life. Hearing this Thakur said : Why should you think of doing so ? You are blessed with a guru. Why worry ?

"A rich devotee to Jesus Christ, a highly religious soul, he practised charity, truthfulness, restraint and the ten commandments. Seeing him, he said : Everything about you is good but 'One thing thou lackest. ...Give (your all) to the poor....and come....and follow me.' (St. Mark 10:21) Then I shall teach you religion. The bhakta could not do it—his attachment was strong, that's why. Seeing him in this state, the other bhaktas sat dejected with the palms of their hands on their cheeks. On being asked the reason they said: "Lord, our state is just the same—the inside full of desires for enjoyment. What if he has been exposed." Christ, blessing them said, You should not worry on that account. I know all. As you have taken refuge in God, I shall remove all hurdles, each

one. You need have no fear. The impossible becomes possible, if He wills; insuperable difficulties are got over by His grace. 'With men this is impossible' but with God all things are possible.' (St. Matthew 19:26) The juggler, just by a jerk of his hand, loosened a thousand knots of his rope. But out of the ten thousand persons who were there, not one was able to untie even one. Such wonder it is! So one has to take refuge in the Guru. The Guru, that is God. He has just come down as an avatara. About the rich he said: "They can neither give up wordly enjoyment, nor can they take refuge in God. 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God'. (St. Matthew 19:24)."

At the behest of M, the Doctor is again reading out the letter of the sadhu to all present. The reading of the letter is over. M again begins to talk.

M (To the bhaktas)—Oh, what a yearning! He has written, "May it come about in this very life—God realization". That is why I say: Those who are not yet married have a great chance. Just by desiring, they may qualify for this matchless wealth, soon obtain endless peace and happiness. After marriage, they get into a little difficulty. The path does not remain so easy. They succeed gradually. And, the others, for example this sadhu, succeed in no time. Like one standing in the middle of the field, there is no dearth of light, such abundance all round.

"God thinks for everybody. He also thinks for yogis like this sadhu. And then there are yogi cum bhogis, like the Pandavas. He thinks of them too. Sri Krishna would always accompany the Pandavas. In the battle of Kurukshetra also, he was the president of the war council and again the chrioteer of Arjuna. God thinks also of

the bhogis. Even so for the bhaktas, he has greater anxiety.

16th May 1923 A.D.

5

Half past six in the afternoon. In the room, on the first floor of Morton School, M is seated with the bhaktas. 'The boy from Agarpara' now an aged devotee of Thakur, Ashu Babu has come. And an old bhakta of Decca has also come. A discussion is going on with him on the propagation of Master's thoughts in East Bengal.

M (To the bhakta from Decca)—Yes, the Eastern Bengal accepted this thought more. They have determination, and vitality. The people of this region will take up very cautiously. These days most of the inmates of the Math are from East Bengal.

"Thakur had a desire to visit that region. He even sent some of his bhaktas there. He had a great desire to see the River Padma. In his previous incarnation, he came, you see from there—from Sylhet. That is why he remembered the old story and wanted to visit. He said to Vivekananda once, when the latter had just started visiting him, when he was only nineteen: 'Have you heard of Gauranga? Have you seen people saying, Gaur, Gaur? —The same Gauranga am I'. On hearing this Vivekananda began to think: Is this man not mad? What is he saying? Later on, he told the same thing to his friends (to M and others). Vijaykrishna Goswami had said, "While meditating, I saw you in Decca just as if you were sitting close by.' Vivekananda in the beginning was a little 'like that' (non-believer in philosophy etc.). Later on, he used to say, 'How can I deny any more?' In other words, he also had visions and so on.

"One should not talk too much of God-visions. If

Thakur saw that somebody was rather too communicative, he would scold him and say, 'You will not mention about God-vision etc. even to me'. God is a treasure to be hid—it should be kept in a hidden place. Otherwise the feeling gets destroyed. One should call upon him secretly in a solitary place. And on having the vision, 'Cherish in the heart the adored Mother Shyama with all care. O my mind ! May you and I only see none else.'

"There are signs of God-vision. One becomes like a child, like a mad man, like an inanimate thing, like a *pishacha*. All karmas get reduced—क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि—and his karmas decrease. Then other desires fall off. And all doubts vanish. It is all in the Vedas: भिद्यन्ते हृदयग्रन्थिः छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः।—All the knots of the heart are cut and all doubts dispelled. One becomes the conqueror of one's senses, one gains victory over lust and anger. There is no purity or impurity for him—it is possible that one is answering the call of nature, he finds a jujube lying in front and he puts it immediately in his mouth. Thakur passed through all these states."

The Doctor, Vinay, Bankim, Ghorai and Viren Bose enter the room together. With them comes Jiten the Elder too.

M keeps sitting absent minded for a moment. His talk has stopped. He begins to talk again.

M (To Jiten the Elder)—Just listen to this Id music. His Muslim devotees are enjoying themselves with Him. They comprise a religious community, therefore this rigid determination. During this very month, at 3 A.M., their priests used to give a call to the people from every mosque: Arise, awake, do not sleep any more. Time is passing. Call Allah. How beautiful this call in this grave moment ! It is so inspiring. And what a beautiful system Mohammed has established. A month of fasting followed

by festivity. Only abstenation will not do, so the need for festivity.

“Here are a few of the main obligations in Islam—namaz (prayers) five times, one month of rozas (fasting), the haj, the poor-rate and the morning-call. That’s why they observe roza (fasting). This day, all the devotees the world over are enjoying themselves together. Great faith they have. As soon as it is the time for namaz, they will throw away all work. The coach-man, well, he would stop his cab and begin to offer his prayers there, on the cab itself. What a beautiful system !

“Mohammad said: Wealth, man, life — surrender all to God. God alone is true. Call Him alone—Allah is truth, and that which they call upon besides Him is falsehood. And then—Allah loves those who do good to others. And he also said, “He who submits entirely to God has the best of religions.” The essence of Gita too the same —मामेकं शरणं ब्रज— Take refuge in Me. This is the highest religion. That is why Thakur practised religious disciplines of Mohammad’s way. Then getting the food cooked by a Brahmin, he would eat pulao and such food just like them in earthen-ware. He had also the vision of the prophet.

“With the same one God, all men are enjoying themselves in different countries, in different ages, and in different ways. On understanding this everybody becomes one’s own, then nobody is a stranger. There remains no quarrel either. It is to make us understand this that Thakur has come and practised religion by different paths. Following different paths, He has reached the same place at last. So he has said: “As many religions, so many paths, religions-paths.” When this idea gets disseminated in the world then alone will there be peace.

Calcutta, May 18, 1923 A.D.

4th Jaishtha 1330 (Bengali year)

Friday, the 4th day of the Bright Fortnight.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THAKUR'S WORDS ALL VEDA-MANTRAS

Room on Morton's first floor, M seated on a mat on the floor, facing the east. All around many bhaktas and sadhus. Today Swamis Arupananda, Brijeshwarananda, Brahmacharis Ramesh, Surya and another person have come from the Belur Math. A group of bhaktas come from Bhavanipur. Ashu Babu of Agarpara has come. Besides them, the usual bhaktas are of course there. Durgapada and Surapati come later.

Now it is quarter to seven in the afternoon. Summer season. A question has risen about bhajan.

M (To the sadhus)—He would advise practice of japa-dhyana at fixed hours. What is decided to be done at a particular time I must do—such a determination is needed. He said to a person, 'If you do not sit for japa and dhyana in the evening, what? Are you going to abduct the wife or daughter of some family?' He was staying in the Cossipore garden—he was unwell then. So one should call upon Him in the evening, leaving off all work. He said how much trouble the rishis took before they could realize Him. Early morning, they would come out of their ashramas and go into deep forests, so that people may not come to disturb them in their prayers. And they would return in the evening. So much they did and then they could get his darshana. Now all they said are Veda-mantras.

"Whatever Thakur has said are also mantras—every word a mantra. Mantra, that is the word of God Himself. It is through the mouth of the rishis, the great

spiritual men, the avatars that He talks. So their words are all mantras. Is it that a mantra can only be in Sanskrit ? It can also be in Bengali, in other languages too. 'It is He who has become all—living beings, the twenty-four elements'—this is one of the mantras of Thakur. This is again the essence of the Gayatri. The Gayatri is the essence of the Veda. The same is said in the Devi Bhagavata. Shukadeva underwent tapasya and then there was a divine revelation : It is He Himself who has become all—whatever is in this world.

"Ma has kept me in this state, so I am with devotion and devotees. Again he said some time before ending his leela, 'I look for the 'I' but cannot find it. I see now, all is She'.

The Old Bhakta (from Bhavanipur)—Was it then that you recognized him as an avatara ? And that he is now going to disappear ?

M—Oh, no. Can we ever recognize him ? What intelligence have we ? Can a one-seer pot contain 10 seers of milk ? Such a highly eligible person was Arjuna. Even he could not recognize. Said he, "Asit, Deval, Vyasa and such other rishis are saying: 'You are the avatara and you yourself say so—स्वयंचैव ब्रवीषि मे—so we believe that you are God.' If even an Arjuna says so what are we ?

"Nobody can recognize an avatara—till He gets himself recognized. By His grace can one hold on to Him, otherwise not. The doctrine of avatara is so mysterious. Man with limitations, a conditioned being,—how will He make one understand Him ? Is it a calculation of finite things, e.g. two plus two equal to four. He is infinite. In His case intellection is helpless.

M (To all)—Some one asked Thakur what was the

way ? Immediately without thinking for a moment, he replied : 'Faith in the word of the guru.' This is yet another great mantra. And he said : 'What is the word of the guru like ? As if a man is being tossed up and down in a sea agitated by tempestuous waves. And he finds a life-boat—the word of the guru is this life-boat.' —The only buoy in the sea of the world. Excepting the word of the guru what else is our sustenance ? One should have faith in the word of the guru.

(With a smile) "Thakur said : There are three kinds of physicians—superior, medium and inferior. The inferior one pockets his fees and goes away just after writing down his prescription. The medium type only asks the patient with a little of persuasion to take the medicine and diet. But the superior physician, kneeling on the chest of the patient forces him to take the medicine. Similarly the gurus he said, were of three kinds : The inferior guru goes away after initiating ; no trace of him. The medium guru advises a little of japa and dhyana. And the superior guru forcibly makes one do it. Thakur was a superior guru—he would get things done forcibly."

The Old Bhakta—Well, sir, Who is a satguru ?  
M—'sat' means that which is eternal, and 'asat' that which is short-lived. That Eternal Satchidananda is the satguru. He himself comes as an avatara in the form of a guru.

A Bhakta—Then what are the hereditary gurus ?

M—Yes, them too you should accept as God Satchidananda. Thakur used to say this. You have to believe that He Himself is initiating you through that mouth. Taking the guru as a man will avail nothing, this he said. That is why one should take the guru as God.

A Bhatka—Well, if the guru says something unreasonable ?

M—One should not see his unreasonableness. Why should I ? I shall do my duty.

Another Bhakta—All right. Suppose the guru says : Giving up Kali, Krishna, and the rest worship me alone. What is to be done then ?

M—Yes, Thakur used to say another thing : One should accept a guru only after sufficient testing. Once you have taken a guru there is no way to give him up. Is the guru like the washerman's wear—that they will have to be changed at ten places—once here, then elsewhere. And one should get initiated only when one has the understanding that the guru is God. Some ten persons are getting initiated so I should also follow them —this attitude will lead to nothing. One must have faith within. When the mind has accepted the guru as God only then initiation. Is it an imitation business—since he is taking I should also do the same ?

Another Bhakta—What did Thakur say about taking initiation ?

M—To some he would say: It will be done just by coming here. As for others, he would just trace something on the tongue. Yet others he would tell some other way. To those who had their initiation from the family guru—it has been seen—he would say : It will be done just by coming here.

Thakur told a story about devotion to the guru. (See M—the Apostle and the Evangelist, part I, page 286). What is there in this story ? Just this, the lady disciple had taken her guru as God and had done her duty. That is why God revealed Himself to her. The disciple made the guru see Him—The disciple turned guru. One should not see the defects of the guru. The guru asked her to drown herself in the river and the disciple went to do so. Why ?—Only because she was able to take the guru as God. Guru's command, the

command of God. So he sent to drown herself. One must not see defects in the guru.

## 2

M (To the sadhus)—Seeing the avatara is seeing God. This is what Thakur said. Christ also said the same: 'he that hath seen me hath seen the Father (St. John 14:9)...I and my Father are one, (St. John 10:30). Why did Thakur say: It will be done just by coming here ?—Because by seeing him one would be inspired. Why does one take to japa and tapa ?—To get inspiration of God, isn't it ? And when God Himself is sitting here ? You are directly in the presence of God. God is here in human form. That's why he said, 'By coming here it will be done'. Only he knew himself.

(Smiling) "Hazra was one day counting his beads. Thakur took the rosary from him and threw it away, and said : Counting beads even here ! In other words, the aim of counting beads is to see God, and this is being fulfilled here at once. What else is the purpose of japa then ?

"A bhakta would come and fix his eyes constantly on his. On the departure of the bhakta, he would say to others : 'If collecting the whole mind one could offer it here what else would remain to be done ?' In other words I am none but that for whom sadhan—bhajan is practised. He sent a message to a bhakta through another bhakta : 'Go and tell him—only meditation on me will do. Nothing else will have to be done'. At night, he would say to the Mother : 'Well Mother, I have sent this message to him. Have I done anything wrong ? I see, Mother, You yourself have become all the five elements, the mind, the intellect, the chitta, the ahankara, the twenty four tattvas,—you are all these'. He knew himself, therefore he said so. But for God who dare

say such a thing ? Who can recognize him till he himself makes other recognize.

A Bhakta—If one does not take the avatara as God, what will happen ?

M—Thakur used to say: If chillies are taken even unknowingly one would still feel their pungency. Even if one does not recognize Him, how will one miss the joy of His presence ?

Swami Arupananda—The joy that people felt in his presence, not a particle of it can be had now from a thousand descriptions even.

M ((absent-mindedly))—What to speak of it !

A Bhakta—How did he treat the householder devotees ?

M—One day, all the boys were there. One of them was already married. Pointing towards him he said : 'For you, I have greater worry, since you are already married. For these, not so much.' It means by marriage, the problem has been complicated. That's why God has greater worry for him. The reason—he has to walk with a load on the head, you see.

Another Bhakta—On hearing that one was married would he feel troubled ?

M—How could it be otherwise ? He used to say: 'Marrying is nothing short of entering a burning fire.'

A Bhakta—No sooner was he in lime-light than he departed. Was it the reason that he wanted to live in hiding ?

M—Yes, but with his intimate devotees his conduct was free. He would long for them, send for them off and on and reveal himself to them.

Brahmachari Surya—What did he say about japa-dhyana ?

M—About japa ? He would ask one to take to japa after initiation. Dhyana he emphasized very much.

The other Brahmachari—Did He himself say : Mediate on me and it will be done ?

M—Yes, several times. So many times, he said : 'By meditating on me alone it will be done.' He could see himself, you see. At the *Anterjali*\* of his mother, on the Bakultala ghat, he clutched at her feet and said weeping : 'Mother, who are you that kept me in the womb ?'

The Old Bhakta—If he knew himself why did he weep holding her feet and saying : Mother, who are you ?

M—He knew himself to be the Absolute Brahman, God. That's why he said : 'Who are you, Mother who kept me in the womb ? Was he comparing ? No, he was saying: 'You are not an ordinary mother.' Why ?—Because, she had kept the avatara in her womb.

M (To the bhaktas)—'....he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust, (St. Matthew 5:45)—bestows the same grace on all—*Ayachit*, unsought grace. How can He have love for one and not for the other ? He would love all and think for all. On the one hand, he would visit the Sadharana Brahma-Samaj, on the other, the Nava-Vidhan, and also the Aadi-Samaj. Even the Sahajyas, the Kartabhajas, he did not abandon. The Vaishnavas, the Shaktas and others equally received his love. He loved the Muslim and the Christian devotees equally. On Rasik† also he showered his grace with the same heart. Why did he visit different types of bhaktas ?—Because they all call on God. Once he reached one of the bhaktas. The bhakta felt embarrassed and said, "Whereas I should

\*The dying person is taken to the bank of the Ganga in a cot. Two legs of the cot are placed in the water of the Ganga & the other two remained on the earth. This rite is called *Anterjali*.

†A scavenger of the Dakshinashovan Temple.

have gone to you it's you who have come." Thakur said, with a smile, 'The needle also attracts the magnet sometimes.' Why this conduct?—for He has the same eye for all.

Swami Arupananda—The holy Mother used to say: "A man so full of joy I have never seen anywhere, as if a child of five. Is there any other like him?"

M (smiling)—Yes, He took his meals at Keshab Sen's. He said to us, 'Don't tell anybody. Otherwise, they will not let me enter the Kali Temple.' The next day I saw the temple cashier passing in front of him. Thakur started saying of his own accord: 'Look here, yesterday I went to Keshab Sen's. He made me eat so much. Whether it (the food) has been served by washermen or the barbers: I do not know. Well, has it caused me any harm? The cashier said laughing, 'What then? For you there is no harm in anything'. What a childlike nature!

(Smiling) "The Captain used to be very angry for he (Thakur) went to Keshab Sen's. Keshab Sen had married away his daughter in Cooch Bihar, he had visited Europe—the Captain did not like this. Daily he would complain. Then one day Thakur retorted so as to shut his mouth. He said, "Why do you go to the Governor to shake hands with him? You can go to him for the sake of money and for me to go for Hari-nam, is it so harmful?" The Captain had no reply. He was the representative of the Nepal State. Thakur loved him very much. He (the Captain) used to say: "How foolish are the Bengalis? They have a jewel (Ramakrishna) among them but they don't recognize him." Without being a jewel can one recognise a jewel?

"Thakur's approach was that a jujube tree is bound to have thorns. Why should we bother about it? Picking

jujube-plum (acting with his hand, putting it into the mouth) I have come to eat the plum. I shall eat it."

M (To the bhaktas)—Thakur would think for the whole world. He came for all the jivas. (Smiling) Seeing so many *dals* (groups) in the Brahma-Samaj he would say making a pun (on the word *dal*): "Well where do *dals* (lotus leaves) exist? In pits and ponds, isn't it? In rivers, seas, they cannot exist.' He hinted: I am the sea. There are no groups in me.

"Oh, but for him, is there a way for us? How much he would think for us! He even taught us how to 'strike with our head'. I used to see in Mihijam how the goats taught their kids to strike with their head, raising the head. How to defend themselves this they were teaching. Thakur also taught the bhaktas how to defend themselves. About the new brahmacharis who would take to the monastic life he used to say: They would not even look at the pictures of women. To householders he said: You must not sleep in the same bed. His intimate disciples he taught like a mother. When they follow him others will also learn."

## 3

A Bhakta—When Thakur had departed what was the condition of the Holy Mother?

M—When Thakur left the body, Mother said, 'This, his maya-body has gone. His illumined body endures eternally.' (Smiling) Once Hriday Mukherji said, 'Aunty, if you can address Uncle as father, I shall make you feast on 5 seers of sandesha (Bengali sweet).' Mother said, 'Son, you will not have to give sandesh. I am saying of my own accord: He is my father, mother, guru, friend, husband, all these.' She got him in all these relationships, you see. What a faith Mother had!

A Bhakta—He worshipped the Holy Mother, didn't he ?

M—Yes.

Swami Arupananda—I had asked Mother. She told me that it was done on the day of Phalaharni Puja. Where the pitcher of the Ganga water is placed now in Thakur's room, there was her seat. A person had made arrangements. Thakur had dressed her up and even applied *alta* (red coloured foot paint) to her feet.

The Old Bhakta—Didn't the Holy Mother feel shy ?

M—She was in ecstasy. No question of her external consciousness.

Swami Arupananda—This I had asked too. The Mother had replied, 'I had no external consciousness. When I regained consciousness, I offered namaskaras mentally.'

Hearing this story, M twice made sounds with his tongue indicative of emotion.

M (To the bhaktas)—The Mother was then 19 years old. The worship took place in 1872. Fifty years have gone by.

Swami Arupananda—The Mother was 16 then.

M—No, You have wrongly been reported to. She was nineteen.

A Bhakta—Did you see Thakur and Mother talking, when she used to serve food to him ?

M—Sometimes on going that side, he was seen talking, standing beyond the Nahabat. With the Mother lived Golap Ma, Jogin Ma, Gaur Ma, all these. Binda the maid, working on part time basis, would also come at times.

There was also Sabir Ma. Such a small room and so many persons. Besides, their belongings were also there.

Swami Arupananda—Mother used to say, 'Fish was kept alive in that very room for Thakur. It made a bubbling sound. Mother would perform her japa seated on the step of the first floor. Referring to the dressing up of the Mother on the Shorashi Puja day, Lakshmi Didi would say jocularly to Mother, "Did you not feel shy? How could you allow the husband to do so?"'

Newly arrived bhakta—What did he say about sadhan-bhajan?

M—One day, a bhakta was carrying some gram with him to keep the count of his japa. He would put aside one gram for every 108 japas. Noticing it, Thakur asked for the gram and went away with it. And he said: What is this? Will it not give rise to pride that you perform so much japa? You had better sit down and perform any amount of japa. You rather give me the gram. I shall cook and eat it. (Everybody laughs) He would advise a lot of japa and dhyana.

"Lest one should become proud he would not advise much going on pilgrimage or visiting the temples. He would ask, 'You have been to Kashi and Vrindavana, haven't you? That will do—one is the place of jnana, the other of bhakti. By doing more you will go on announcing: I have done this, I have done that.' So much he would do to protect.

"A big meeting was held at Jadu Mullick's house—there were many people. Thakur asks Keshab Babu, 'Tell me, how much of it (jnana—bhakti) have I attained? Tell me its weight. On being asked repeatedly, Keshab says indecisively, 'Sixteen annas in a rupee (100%). He replies immediately, 'No, I cannot put my faith in your word. You are living a life of name, fame, and creature comfort. Had Narada or Shukadeva said so I would have believed.' Just see that Keshab Babu was recog-

nized all over the world—of him too, he does not believe the word. What then is popular applause worth? People, moths. Who has the power to recognize him? Only he was able to recognize himself.

“Always in samadhi, this man. All is Mother—always ‘Ma, Ma’. After talking about Sita, he would hint at his own state. Sita lives in Lanka, a prisoner. Hanuman having seen her tells Rama, ‘Yama is coming and going.’ By thinking an Rama, her external consciousness had been lost—almost like a dead body. That is why Yama is coming and going. Yama only carries away the subtle body—and that is immersed in the thought of Rama. What should Yama carry away then? That’s why he is coming and going. The state of Thakur was the same—except for Mother he know nothing else.”

A Bhakta—How should one think on Him?

M—In any way it would be all right. Form, leela or great sayings. Thinking on Him will also inspire. Talking about Dr. Mahendra Sirkar, he would say, ‘If I tell him to take to japa-dhyana, he would not listen, a man with English education as he is.’ Him he made to meditate in a different manner. Mahendra Babu had said, ‘I had no sleep last night. I was continuously afraid lest he (Thakur) should catch cold—all the windows were open.’ Thakur was then lying ill in the Kashipore garden. He could not have sleep because of his anxiety for him, to be sure. He would make him think on him in this way.

Bhakta—Just by touching Thakur would one experience bhava?

M—Yes, but not all. Only those who were pure and sattvic experienced it. Those whose minds were not pure would not experience it. But they felt inspired on seeing him, nevertheless.

Now, it is about 9 a.m. M, giving a written description of the inauguration ceremony of the Mother's Temple at Jayrambati to Arupananda says : By its publication in the Udbodhan many people will be benefited. M is singing together with the bhaktas. 'Sing, sing, victory, victory to the Name of Ramakrishna!'

Calcutta, 19th May 1923 A.D.

5th Jaishtha, 1330 (Bengali year)

Saturday, the 5th day of the Bright Fortnight

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE UNKNOWN AND UNKNOWABLE OF KANT KNOWN TO RAMAKRISHNA

In Mihijam the health of M had improved considerably. In Calcutta climate it is again deteriorating. Three or four days ago, M caught cold—his voice has become hoarse. Even then he is seated with the bhaktas in the sitting-room of the first floor. Now it is about 6 p.m. Shukalal, Doctor, Vinay, Jiten the Younger and Nalini, also Jagabandhu are there. A new bhakta has arrived; he is above thirty years old. He is talking to him.

M (To the new-comer)—What is an oasis in a desert so is the company of sadhus in the world. In the desert, man over-whelmed by thirst tosses in agony. And finding an oasis in front he goes and takes shelter there and thus saves his life. In the same way, agitated by the troubles and tribulations of the world, man takes refuge in the oasis of the company of sadhus.

M (To the new-comer)—Haven't you read Geography ? o-a-s-i-s. What does the man do, seeing the oasis in the desert ?

New-comer.—He takes shelter there.

M (Speaking at the same time)—He takes shelter there. Were he not to do so what would happen ? He would die.

Bhakata—He would die.

M—In the same way, the oasis of the world is the company of sadhus. He who does not take shelter there dies.

In the meanwhile, Yogen, Shanti, Amrit, Amulya the Elder, Sukhendu, Surpati and Gadadhar appear. A bhakta has arrived from Goalanda. M is not well, so he asks for the 'Gospel' to be read.

Nalini, the Younger is reading : Prahlad is praying like a child. The Lord of the bhaktas, Nrisingh is licking the body lovingly.

M—So very dear is the bhakta. Seeing the raging figure of Nrisingh, the gods are terrified. After consultations, they have sent the most beloved bhakta, Prahlad to his presence. Bhagavana out of parental affection begins to lick his body. Then peace prevails in the world. So Thakur said: 'Bhakta and Bhagavana are one.' The reading continues. Thakur says to Mani : Don't you feel ashamed ? You have children and you still sleep with your wife. Don't you feel a dislike for this animal-like conduct ? Saliva, blood, excreta, urine—do they not revolt you ? To him who thinks on the lotus-feet of Bhagavana, even the most beautiful woman appears to be like the ashes of a pyre. The body that will not last, that which contains worms, pus, sputum, all kinds of dirty matter—enjoying yourself with such a body ! Don't you feel ashamed ?

M—Without the grace of the guru, it is impossible to conquer lust, anger and so on—just as it is impossible to walk in the void, so also it is. If His grace descends, if bhakti is attained, it is possible. He used to say : 'Just as the leech falls off by applying lime, similarly on attaining bhakti all these fall off. Even a drop of his love would turn woman and gold into trifles.'

The reader continues reading : 'But the worldly men always need the company of the holy. All need it in fact, even the sannyasi needs it. Even so the wordly

need it more particularly. The malady is always there, one has to live in the midst of lust and gold.'

M—No other remedy but the company of sadhus. This alone sets everything right. You would read the scriptures but the meaning would not be clear unless you have had the company of sadhus. On keeping the company of sadhus, one feels the urge for tapasya, then comes hold on the precept. Many people buy holy books and read by themselves, but they cannot have hold on the spirit. Where is concentration? It comes from the company of sadhus. (To the bhaktas) These visits of yours to the Math, meetings with the sadhus, they serve the purpose of the study of a thousand scriptures.

"Thakur has said : Lust and gold are Maya itself. By this the mind falls from yoga and naturally 'goes to lust and gold. This is a great disease. But on taking the medicine one gets cured. The medicine is the company of the sadhus, and praying, praying secretly in a solitary place with a yearning.

"Only reading is of no avail without taking to sadhana. By keeping the company of the sadhus, one feels the urge for sadhana. The sadhus practise sadhana and one sees them do so. Those who are rich yet devoted to God are to be taken as the fallen yogis, fallen because of their desire for enjoyment when they were practising yoga in their previous life. That is why they would attain peace only on the completion of the remaining bhoga in this life."

The reader reads again. Mani has gone through the philosophy of Vedanta a little. Besides, he has read a little of the distant echoes of the Vedanta in the thoughts of Kant, Hegel and other German thinkers.

M (smiling)—That which Kant calls 'unknown' and 'unknowable', of that Thakur had darshana and then he

would say on oath before a room-ful of men : Verily, verily I say to you, it's the Mother who has come. If one wishes to understand by this intellect one can only go that far but He is knowable by the purified intellect and purified mind. The point at which the rishis left off and started sadhana, they (Kant and others) could only reach. Even now they do not know anything about sadhana. In the state of sadhana, one has to give up all —'Not this, not this.' Reaching the top of the roof one sees that the bricks and stone-dust of which the roof is made are also the same of which the steps are made. After seeing Him only one can understand that He Himself has become the jiva and the jagat. But during sadhana : 'Not this, not this.'

It is 9 p.m. M is not well. Almost all the bhaktas have left. Only a few are there. Amulya the Elder is seated beside M and is stating his personal difficulties.

Amulya the Elder (humbly)—Why does the mind behave so ? Sometimes it rises high up, sometimes it falls down below.

M (In a tender voice)—Girish Ghosh also said the same to Thakur. Thakur replied : Living in family, waves must rise. That's why effort should be made to live at a distance. Having taken a bottle of wine why am I tipsy ? This question is madness. That's why having lived in solitude for a long time when 'the trunk has grown big' there is no harm in living a wordly life—living in the household after attaining jnana and bhakti. Then the risk is somewhat less. But risk there is all right. Even so, if He takes up the case, there is no danger. If He so wills He can keep the jnanis in family too. After His darshana one does not take a false step. Thus, till He has been realized one has to keep the company of sadhus, live a lonely life occasionally and weep and pray. One should live surrendering oneself.

are not married but they are a different class. This will not do. Yearning has to be there. If one desires one can be the master of this peerless wealth. Those who have long been enjoying worldly pleasures, have turned into delirious patients. They talk disjointedly. Nothing can satisfy them. A whole room full of sweets, all high class eatables. Leave a boy there. He will eat this and that. And leave there a delirious person, nothing will satisfy him. Rabri?—no. Superior sandesh?—no. Aludam?—no. Nothing satisfies him. Why is this state?—Having lived amidst sense objects for too long, he has developed, a distaste for good things.

“A person came this morning. Hearing all this he began to weep. I found he had got rid of his delirium. Otherwise could he ever like such talk. Said he, ‘If not here where is heaven?’ He had been to the Math once. He sits down in the Maidan. The sadhus are loitering in groups in the late afternoon. Seeing this he thinks : If not here where shall I find heaven ? What sublime thoughts are coming to his mind ! His delirium is gone. That’s why he sees everything red (as divine).

“With the desire for sense objects within—even with a drop of it one cannot attain samadhi. Sense desire—not only desire for money but also colour, taste, smell, sound, touch, all these. Those who are not married can inherit this wealth just by desiring it—they can attain jnana-bhakti, viveka-vairajya, prema, samadhi (knowledge and devotion, discrimination and dispassion, love and realization of God).”

The ‘Gospel’ is being read—‘Mani living with the Guru’. The reading continues:—Mani asks, “Sir, Is the sadhana of God-without-form feasible?” Ramakrishna says: “Why not? That is a very difficult path. The ancient rishis, by tapasya became aware of the Self realized what is Brahman. How much of hard labour did they

put in—they would come out of their huts early in the morning ; practising tapasya the whole day they would return late in the evening. Thereafter they would take a little of fruits and roots.'

M—Why has he said all this ? So that, somebody among those present may attain awakening, even if he acts a little. If one acts a little on what Thakur has said, he will succeed.

Jiten the Elder—Well, except for this, is there no other way ?

M (In a grave tone)—Why not ? If He wills what can He not do ? Then there are those perfected by sadhana, perfected by grace, perfected by dream. Rishis and munis have taken to sadhan and bhajan for teaching humanity. Somebody succeeds in no time, why ? Because he had good fortune, so he succeeded by His grace. But then, will all succeed in the same way ? Through sadhana, all can. That's why the rishis underwent tapasya. Seeing them some might do a little.

Jiten the Elder—The case of wordly people is serious—joy, sorrow and what not !

M—No, no, not that. Joy and sorrow are but different states. In fact, there is nothing like joy and sorrow—just like a dream. In my childhood. I used to dream somebody strangling me or I eating at a dinner and so on. When the dream was broken I would see that all that was false. These joys and sorrows are also the same. After God-realization one is no longer aware of them. सुख दुःखे सम भूत्वा . . . . समलोष्टाश्म कांचन—Dust, stone and gold, all look alike after God-realization—all Satchidananda.

May 21, 1923.

M is seated on the floor of the room on the first storey—beside him are an old sannyasi and a number of bhaktas. It is 6-30 p.m. The sannyasi has come from Decca. M is talking to him joyfully.

Sannyasi (To M)—I had not yet entered the monastic life. I had the good fortune of seeing Thakur. But I am very unfortunate. In spite of his darshana I could achieve nothing. Now I am beginning to understand something of his words.

M—You are very fortunate. You have seen him and you are imbibing his word. Seeing the avatara and seeing God are the same. That's why Christ said: 'he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. (St. John 14:9) Seeing him and imbibing his word—is it a matter of small fortune? Did you say you had not embraced the monastic life then?

Sannyasi—No till then I didn't know that I would have to do this service. But all is well with me. There is no income tax in this service, nor watch and ward tax no paying of revenue, nothing of the sort.

M (Laughing)—Yes.

In the meanwhile, Shukalal, Doctor, Vinay, Rakhal, Tarak, Sukhendu, Jiten the Younger, Mukanda and other bhaktas came in, and assembled.

Sannyasi—I was acquainted with Swamiji and Vijay. krishna Goswami also had affection for me. When Swamiji went to Decca I accompanied him from Goalanda to Narayan Ganj, in a steamer. I had seen him and now I am seeing you. Seeing you here is the same as visiting Calcutta and having the darshana of Mother Kali.

M (with a smile)—No. You have seen him. You are fortunate.

Having taken some sweets, the sannyasi said goodbye. Now it is evening. Everybody is meditating. After the dhyana, Mukunda sang : 'Let us sing : Victory, victory to the name of Ramakrishna'. After him Antevasi sang : 'Yonder is the abode of joy, unique in its beauty, beyond the ocean of the world, illumined.'

After the music was over, M heard the description of the Math of the previous night from Jiten the Younger. Jagabandhu has been describing it from the morning till the afternoon.

Enters Jiten the Elder, accompanied by a pensioner.

M (To Jiten the Elder)—Just listen Jiten Babu. Listen about the Math—it is about sadhus. The Gita describes the man of steady wisdom—What's that Doctor ?

Doctor.—स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।

स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत् ब्रजेत किम् ॥

(Gita 2:54)

M—स्थितधीः प्रभाषेत किमासीत् ब्रजेत किम्—that is to say, How do sadhus talk, how do they live, how do they move about ? Over and above the day-to-day life of man, there is a higher life. When one begins to believe in this then comes this question. In the Math, reside all such mahatmas who are of steady wisdom. Of them we are talking. Except for talking about them, there is no way for us worldly people. Their 'watch' is right, ours wrong'. So the need for comparing ours daily with theirs. Then only there will be peace, there will be joy. Listening about them one gets awakening.

Jagabandhu—Mahapurusha Maharaj said today : 'A young man had come from Decca after taking his M. Sc. examination. He stayed for several days but has left now.' He was saying, 'I am getting afraid, learning that talks of my marriage are going on.' His elder brother is an M.A. He says he will not marry. His father is a head-master, in the west, in Mirzapur.

M—Yes. That's how the world goes on. Some run away for fear of marriage, others come running at the talk of their marriage. Some are giving up, others are taking up. This is the play of Mahamaya. In the absence of sanskaras, one marries even after the awakening. Such is the play !

"Thakur said, 'There is a slender line. On this side of it animality, humanity—as soon as it is crossed, divinity.' This line is that of desire for sense enjoyment, that is to say, that for woman and gold. The moment woman and gold are given up one is divine.

Jiten the Elder (with despondency)—

'All is after Your will. You are Tara, the self-willed,

O Mother, You do your own work, men call it theirs.

M—A person said the same to Thakur. When God is doing everything we need not do anything. Snubbing him immediately Thakur said, 'Don't talk big. So long He has kept the 'I' one should pray. When He wipes out this 'I', then you may say so.' Until that is done you have to weep and call on Him secretly in a solitary place. So long there is 'I', there is 'you', till then prayer.

Pensioner—Sir, the song says: 'O Mother, let a single call finish my crying for the rest of my life.' What kind of call is that ? When does it come ?

M—It comes of itself as one calls and calls. From oral it becomes the inner call. Thakur said, 'Just as plunged into water one gasps for life, similarly when one's breath struggles for God then only that cry emanates.' Thakur did give out that cry—and the Mother revealed Herself. At first, cry to call on Her orally. In the end, with deep longing that cry will issue from within. Then only Her darshana.

Jiten the Elder—Sir, 'I' dying, all complexities will end. Which is this 'I' ?

M—The scoundrel 'I', the rogue 'I'. There is no harm in the 'I' of a bhakta.

M (To the bhaktas)—Why did Thakur advise weeping and calling on Him secretly, in a solitary place ? Since he did it himself. Didn't he ? And this is the easiest of all paths. He used to say : Life is dependent on food in Kaliyuga, and besides, it is short. Where is the time ? Arranging for food takes away all the time. 'I shall call on Him, I shall call Him', saying so, it is all over. So he would say : Weep and weep and ask Him alone. And he further said: What is attained by different paths—by jnana, dhyana, bhakti and karma yoga—all that is attained by getting His darshana but once, weeping, calling on Him. So he said : By whatever means, have his darshana. All paths have Him as the goal. At the bottom it is but one. So he would say : 'Mother, I don't know so much. You my mother, I your child—only this much I know. What you say I shall hear, the same I shall do.' Oh, What a dispassion! Even the loin-cloth had to be carried in the arm-pit, in the end, naked, like a child of five. He used to say: 'You have done enough of reasoning. Now you call on Him for sometime in a solitary place, secretly, yearningly. After seeing Him one comes to know, all, understands everything. All doubts are resolved. *द्विद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः* Then there

is no 'BUT' in the mind. This is the directest of all paths, and a path conforming to the times.

"Ah! Such he had become ! Nothing else, no other thought could he put up with, just 'Ma, Ma'. One day, he was sitting on the smaller cot, in samadhi, in the after-noon. Coming down from the samadhi, he heard Ashwani Babu's father talking on other matters. He immediately folded his hands and said : Please do not talk these things. It hurts me. Talk about God.' His body and mind were so cast that the moment he heard any other talk he felt pricking all over the body.

Jiten the Elder—Anything one likes, that which gives one pleasure adds to life's vitality. Survival of the fittest is the most important of the laws of Darwin.

M—Yes, Doctor Satyasharan prescribed the same for me. He told the members of the household : Whatever he likes to do let him. The other doctors had stopped me from talking. For full one month fever would not leave. After the prescription of Satyasharan, talking about God with bhaktas I shook off the fever. I was cured. That's why Thakur could neither hear not talk anything but God. So he said: The bhaktas are a different caste. They are not like ordinary men. The bhaktas cannot do without godly talk—they feel as if they would die.

Jiten the Elder—Thakur I haven't seen, I could not understand what is a childlike state. But, the other day, I saw you like a child snatching at the plan of the Holy Mother's temple at Jayarambati, and the report of the festivities.

M—Oh, what was she, the Holy Mother, this you now know. We got Thakur just for five years and the

Mother protected us for thirty-five long years. It was her story, *her* temple.

Calcutta

May 22, 1923 (A.D.)

8th Jaishtha 1330 (Bengali year)

Tuesday, the 8th day of the Bright Fortnight.

“You should give up all work and perform dhyana and japa in the morning and the evening. You are now roaming about gossiping uselessly. Later on are you going to entice somebody’s wife or daughter?” Thus he taught discipline.

“Once, a bhakta went to Calcutta at night. On his return the next day, ‘How did you go at night?’ asked he. The bhakta replied, ‘On leaving this place as soon as I crossed the main gate, I found a cab. I got a seat just for six pice, and I reached the Beadon Square straight. And why should it not be so? I had gone after having your darshana.’ No sooner did he say so, Thakur started rebuking him. Said he: What do you say, man? Does God reward by ‘gourd and pumpkin’? He rewards by divine nectar—the Life Eternal. Asking Him for ‘gourd and pumpkin’ is nothing but asking Him for ‘woman and gold.’

“Girish Ghosh’s servant fell ill. He was given Thakur’s *charanamrita*. When he got well, informing Thakur about it, Girish said, ‘Why not? He had to get well, since he had taken your prasada.’ The answer came instantly: ‘What a thing of low intelligence you have said. Should we ask God for the boon of ‘gourd and pumpkin’? One can have the Eternal Life from Him. For curing physical ailment He has made doctors and kavirajas (Ayurvedic physicians); there are medicines.’ Oh, what an ideal! Only God, nothing else to seek. Where can one find this ideal?

“The Western sadhus (of the West of India) display siddhis (occult powers). May be, they can bring out a milk-sweet from a wall, or walk over the Ganga or cure a patient with a pinch of ash—such things are done by many. But Thakur had a genuine dislike for such things.

“Once Hriday Mukerjee said (to Thakur), ‘Ask Mother for some occult power.’ Thakur’s nature was like that of a child. He asked Mother for the same. Later on, he would tell bhaktas: Mother showed me that it is nothing

more than the stools of a prostitute. I was shown that a prostitute with big basket-like buttocks was answering the call of nature with sputtering sounds. And then he began to scold Hriday: Why did you teach me to ask for occult power?

"Occult power is the stool of a prostitute, that is to say, a mean, low thing. Who can say this but he? About name and fame, he would say: I care a twopence for (lit. beat with a broom-stick) worldly honours. Ornaments were stolen from the Radhakant temple. Mathur Babu took Thakur with him and went to the temple and said, 'What! You could not look after your ornament even, you a god! But Goddess Hanseshwari had the thief apprehended.'" As soon as he said so, Thakur thundered and said: Fie upon you, Seju Babu (Mathur's pet name) with what a mean intelligence have you spoken! He who is served by Laxmi (the Goddess of Wealth) herself, does He feel the want of it? For you, these are ornaments of gold, for God they are no more than clods of earth. Why should He bother to look after them, whether your ornaments are lost or saved? You are considering them precious; for Him they are trinkets—less than trinkets. Who can say such things but Thakur.

"What a state his was! —He could not even touch a coin. Not merely touching, he could not even accept, accumulating wealth is a far cry. Mohindra Kaviraja of Baranagore left five rupees with Ramlal—for Thakur's expenses. On hearing this he said to himself: 'I owe the milk-man. I shall pay him.' Just two hours later, shouting, 'Ram Lal, Ram Lal', he woke him up from sleep. And he asked him to whom the money was given; was it his aunt (the Holy Mother)? Ramlal said, 'No, to you.' Then he said, 'No, this money cannot be kept. Go and return it quickly.' It was mid-night then. After a lot of persuasion, he was calmed down for the time being. The next morning the money was returned. He said to the bhaktas later on: 'By keeping the money I felt I was

being scratched as if by a cat. I could not sleep.' Such was his state.

"Dr. Bhagawan Rudra, an M.D., visited him once. He said to him: 'Just see, what has happened to me? Money I cannot touch.' Saying this, he stretched out his hand and said, 'Just place a rupee on my hand and see.' No sooner was a rupee put there than his breathing stopped and his hand became stiff. Seeing this, the doctor was dumb-founded. There is no such thing in his science, you see."

M (To the bhaktas)—He would always say : One should weep and pray secretly in a solitary place. The less the people know it the better. To his intimate disciples he would say: 'Thinking on me alone will do. Verily, verily, I swear unto you whosoever will think on me shall inherit my wealth, even as a son does inherit his father's wealth. His wealth was jnana, bhakti, viveka, vairajna, prema, samadhi (knowledge devotion, discrimination, dispassion, love and realization of God) Ah! what an ideal! Money, he could not even touch. Worldly name and fame he would 'drive out with a broom-stick.' Occult powers he termed as 'the excreta of a prostitute' and gold and silver as 'clods of earth'. Except for God, who can say all these things?

"He used to say: 'Mother, people are so fond of money. Let it be with them. Talk about it? Nobody will come then.' He would always look to the welfare of others only. That is why he would not talk of money. 'Ma, Ma' on his lips, and he would think wherein lies the welfare of the bhaktas. Go to other sadhus—they would ask for this and that. One would not go to them again. There is nothing like this here. He would say: 'There is no basket collection here. How the bhaktas would find leisure and get rid of worldly activities—this was his effort.

Sannyasi—Well, was the idol of Shiva placed in the

meditation room of the Panchavati in Dashheshwar installed by Thakur? Some people say so.

M—No. None of those things was there. It is quite sometime that Thakur has departed. Even during this interval. it is heard that various things have happened. They say so many different things about him. This room did not even exist there—it was built later. In his time, there was only a thatched room.

## 2

M— (To sadhus)—Once the Bishop of Norfolk wrote a letter in the Times. Criticising the present state of Christianity, he said: "Does any missionary practise the religion of Jesus the Christ now? They are engaged at present in raising contributions, building churches, and so on. But the ideal of Christ had made his apostles take the vow of mendicancy. And now what are these missionaries doing? Money, buildings, subscription, they are busy with these things." And then he said at the end: "Many people will probably be angry with me for saying so but how can I help? I am only telling what is a rare truth. Jesus never had this as his ideal."

"What should come first, God-realization or raising subscriptions, building churches, all these? What is gained thereby? Money is collected and big buildings are erected. These have become the means of personal comfort—one gets two rooms to live, servants, cars and all these. A lot of personal comfort, but what about the real work God-realization? What about that for which all was renounced and this life embraced?

"What the avataras teach, does it remain pure?—No it is bound to be defiled. Thakur used to say: Chaitanya Deva came only 400 years ago. Just see, what has happened during this interval. That Chaitanya Deva who gave

up Hari Das because he had talked to a woman, his followers are now changed into *nera-neri* (degenerated form of spiritual relationship). Chaitanya Deva was an avatara himself; even his teachings have not endured."

M (To the bhaktas)—Thakur had no 'basket'. How to do good to his bhaktas, how they could be free from worldly activities so as to find time to call on God was his thought, always. Money, he would not even mention. How they may have awakening was his constant effort. He was such that just by looking at him one would awake. The teachings of the avatara do not survive in pure form; they must get defiled in the long run. (To the Sannyasi) Do you know the meaning of the 'basket'?

Sannyasi—Yes Sir. The collections at the yatras, the open theatrical performances.

M—Yes. This basket Thakur said is not here. Here, it is all 'Phuran' (Thakur's way of pronouncing the English word 'free') (Laughter). If money is demanded, why will they come? Let them come first. They will have awakening by frequenting here. Who comes if the question of money is raised? So dear is money! He related a story—A Yatra, is being performed at a place. Somebody quietly notices that the 'basket' will have to be paid there. Immediately he quits. Elsewhere he sees no basket. A big crowd there. Immediately elbowing like this (imitating the movement), pushing his way in, he makes a secure seat for himself, and twirling his moustaches, he begins to listen to the music. (Every-body laughs). Here it is a contract—'Phuran'—nothing is to be paid by the audience. With Thakur also the same 'Phuran', no basket or anything of the kind. (To Brahmachari Naren) What do you say? You have all this in your country? Here we have.

Brahmachari—Yes sir. Everywhere this is the custom.

Sannyasi—Even though he has shown all this, where is the awakening among people?

M.—The Kathopanishad talks of Shreya and Preya—‘Preya’ is this world—enjoyment and comfort. ‘Shreya’ means God. How many persons want God? Enjoyment and comfort are all they seek. Ah! what can I say about him? What different states he had. Always immersed in samadhi—various kinds of samadhis, as if demonstration of samadhi. Fixed eyes, eye-brows unmoving, face illumined, mind roaming in unknown regions. Eyes now closed now half-closed, now open—different states.

Sannyasi—Somebody had said:—‘The clay image of the Universal Mother’, said Thakur, ‘is not *mṛinmaya* (made of clay) but *Chinmaya*, (made of spirit, illumined).’

M.—Yes, he saw the illumined form of the Mother. The marble of the floor, the door-frames, the doors, the altar—all these he saw illumined one day. This was in the beginning; later on he would always see the Mother in Her illumined form. At the first darshana the cat that was in the room was also seen in the illumined form. And he started feeding it with sacramental food. This was also another form of the Mother, that’s why.

“Asking for money was a far cry. Even if somebody offered it to him, he would say: ‘No. Better make provision with it for your family and meditate on His name with a carefree mind.’ He also said: ‘By remaining always worried for money, when will there be leisure?’ So he sometimes said: ‘Those who have money are half-liberated in this life. They can meditate on God at will with a carefree mind.’ There should be no burden on anybody, this he was always attentive to. He had greater concern for the householders, who are fettered by karma. Having been married, how can they find time to repeat His name?—that was his constant anxiety.

“He said to Shambhu Mallick ‘Were God to appear before you, would you ask Him for hospitals and dispensaries or for Life Eternal? God first or all these activities? And then, is God gratified with some works of this nature? He wants jnana and bhakti. How one can realise God, meditate on Him, weep and call on Him secretly in solitude—this was the effort of Thakur; only temples and churches would not satisfy Him. His best temple is the heart of the bhakta.”

Sadhus are now bidding good-bye. They will go to the Math. Having entertained them with sweets, a bhakta sees them off respectfully upto the gate with a hurricane lantern in hand. Now it is 8-15 p.m.

## 3

M. (To the bhaktas)—Highly spiritual persons practise sadhana for long, even then He does not reveal Himself. What is its meaning? This is to teach humanity. Emulating them people will take to tapasya.

“How much thought did Thakur give to the bhaktas! The bhaktas do not know how to serve. Lest sin should attach to them he pleads to the Mother: ‘Mother, what is their fault? With all this work they cannot come’ He says all this so that the Mother may not be angry. He broke his hand once—there was a wire fencing, he knocked against it and fell. He says to the Mother: ‘There was no question of his going that far. What is his fault then Mother?’ Rakhal used to carry the water-pot up to the Panchavati (for the Master). The fence was between the Panchavati and Jhautala. Thakur used to go to the Jhautala for answering the call of nature. Ah! What would he not do to save us?

“Once, he went to the Panchavati accompanied by Mani. Under the old banyan tree, where a broken branch was lying, he asked him to prostrate. He said: ‘This is the place of so many divine visions—go and prostrate.’ Like

a mother ! Once he asked a bhakta to bring him a shirt. He brought three. Keeping one, he returned the rest. Lest the bhakta should feel hurt, see how he makes him understand ! He says: 'I say, how many did I ask for?' The bhakta replies, 'One'. 'He then says (returning one), 'You had better keep this with you. I shall take it when I need.' A little later, returning the second, he says 'Take this also. Let it remain with you. You are not a stranger.' Just see the way he puts it. Then he was in the state of complete renunciation; he could not accumulate anything. He said to the bhakta 'Look here. You should not do anything that might hurt me.' If he were to be hurt, it would mean harm to the bhaktas; hence this caution.

"He asked somebody to bring him a durree. He knew that the bhakta would get it purchased through somebody else. So he instructed: 'You should go yourself and buy it.' Why did he say so? So that this one impression would get fixed on his mind. He would be able to meditate on him throughout his life: 'I had given him a durree.' (Smiling) Going out to purchase a durree was an event in itself. The shop was in the Chandni Chowk. He was asking the price at one place, on seeing a good durree. Somebody from the adjacent shop probably said that they were not good and were priced too high. Immediately they both started quarrelling. In the meantime the bhakta ran away. Thereafter he brought it from another shop. On another occasion, he asked some bhakta to bring a few polished metal saucers. Another said, 'But you have already asked so and so for the same. Thakur replied, 'Matters little. Let him bring.' Did he ask for them for his own use? It was for the good of the bhaktas that he accepted their service. What use had he for two sets of saucers? Somebody had a little of bhoga left in him. He sent him to his wife. He also had a son who died at the age of ten. Even though he sent him home yet he himself was pushing the button. At mid-night he wept and prayed to the Divine

Mother: 'Mother, don't let him fall. Keeping the rein in his hand he pulled it from this side.'

M. (To Jiten the Elder) —Among Thakur bhaktas, it is heard that there are some who live like brothers and sisters after they have had one or two children. They do not sleep in the same bed. Thakur brought the Holy Mother and asked her to sleep in the same bed for eight months. Why? For teaching bhaktas. Sleeping in the same bed yet no physical relationship. Living with a woman but having no intercourse with her. That's how the bhaktas would be encouraged, inspired to live like brother and sister. Do you hear Shukalal Babu? There are some who live like that (like brother and sister), it is heard. When the mind goes down by thinking over all those things, and reminding oneself of Thakur's conduct one will be encouraged. This was the purpose behind all these actions of His. His marriage itself was for teaching humanity. How one should live after marriage, he showed by his own conduct.

"Sometimes he would say: 'Finish it off quickly. When the end comes is not certain.' And he would add: 'One should go a little far to a solitary place in between.' People do not want to move. Formerly, as soon as one was fifty one would go to Kashi. Now it is not seen so much. How much shedding of tears! How to afford to go and so on? Why? How was it done formerly? One should do it by thinking in this way—Were I to die today, how will they carry on? Shall I have to sweat throughout my life for the sake of the family? One should make all arrangements quickly, get out of the world, sit down and repeat His name.'

Now the reading of the Kathamrita is going on. Shukalal, Doctor, Jiten the Elder, Rakhal, Sukhendu, Surpati, Viranchi, Ramesh, Brahmachari and others are there. M opens the

book at the chapter: 'Mani's stay with the guru'. Jaga-bandhu reads—

Sri Ramakrishna is saying, 'You have yoga as well as bhoga. Brahmarshi, Devarshi, Rajarshi. Brahmarshi, for example Shukadeva—he has no book. Devarshi, like Narada. Rajarshi, just as Janak—he acts without any desire for reward.

M.—Thakur said, 'God has created three classes of men. First yogis—they are always immersed in His thought, they ask for nothing else, for example Shukadeva, Narada. The next yogis cum bhogis. They also are a class. This too is good. They are on both sides—they want Him as well as this (world), for example the Pandavas. If they have enjoyed the world they have been bhaktas equally. God is always with them. And the third, only bhogis. This also is a class. They are always busy. It is through them that He preserves His creation. One cannot afford to turn up the nose—it will not do to look down upon them. Residing within them in the form of illusion, He gets all this done. It is because of His Maya that they are so divided. All these are essential.

The reading continues. Thakur asks Surendra : Is Remembering and thinking on Him going on ?

M.—Ah, just see. How easy he has made. Just by remembering and thikinng it comes about. How much he has come down.

The reader reads on. Sri Ramakrishna is saying, 'A little of sadhana is necessary. It is the guru who does everything. Even so, he makes one practise a little at the end.'

M.—He used to say : Some have reached perfection by sadhana. Practising music, Ram Prasad became a siddha—a perfected one. He said to the bhaktas : On

weeping and singing in a solitary place He reveals Himself.

Dr. Bakshi—Does it come about through sadhana ?

M.—Certainly it does. Were it not so why did the Gita say : अनेक जन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम्—Having been fully perfected through many births, one reaches the final destiny. But it may not come about in one life. It may be possible after many births. Even the highly spiritual persons have to practise sadhana—for teaching humanity. Thakur narrated a beautiful story :—A person is to carry out sadhana on a dead-body. He takes his seat on the corpse and another person watches all this secretly, while coming to the garden for a stroll. In the meantime there appears a tiger. It pounces and carries away the person sitting on the corpse. He who was hiding comes forward, sits down on the dead-body and begins to repeat the name of the Mother. The Goddess appears before him and says 'Ask for a boon'. The man says, "Answer me first and then I shall ask for the boon". The person who arranged for all this has been carried away by the tiger and I who was just roaming about in the garden came and got you with all his preparations. Why did this happen ?" The Goddess replied, "Son, You had to your credit the sadhana of several lives. Only a little remained. That is done now. But it is only a beginning for him." Such a wonder ! Men are perfected by sadhana also—they are in majority. Those perfected by His grace are only a few.

Bhakta—What is samadhi ? How many kinds ?

M.—(To the bhaktas) Is samadhi such an easy thing ? Only after effort of several lives it comes about. Attaining samadhi is called God-realization. This is the same as the state of perfection, self-realization, God-vision, or realizing Brahman. Samadhi, ordinarily speaking, is of two kinds, Savikalpa and Nirvikalpa, that is with form

and without-form. Samadhi means getting immersed into Him—to transcend time and space, a perfect detachment from the sense world. To attain samadhi is the only goal of life. After the cessation from desire for wordly enjoyments one attains this state. The first day that I went I stood there listening to him. A room-ful of men were seated there. Thakur was saying : “When by remembering God or listening about Him tears begin to flow and the hair stand on end, know for certain that karma has almost been renounced, not much is left. Only on renouncing karma, samadhi. What happens in samadhi who knows ? Only they know who have attained it—it cannot be described in words. Avatars and such others only have this state. From a distance one hears the sound of ho, ho ! But on entering the market one can see what is what—which one is the potato-shop and which one that of *parwal*. We are indeed fortunate—we who have lived with a person who was always immersed in samadhi. So, by His grace, are we understanding a little. All these are not matters to talk about—one realizes by internal awareness. Thakur could make one attain that state by his grace, by his touch or his mere desire. He actually made his bhaktas attain this state. The holy books talk of samadhi—it is like learning musical notations by heart, one cannot play the music thereby. One can play it only after the tapasya of several lives by His grace. Gaining samadhi only for once is so difficult but Thakur is having this state daily, again and again—as if possessed by a spirit. While coming down from samadhi he would say : ‘Now the bare pundits seem to me like straw’, that is to say, mean, good for nothing. We are indeed fortunate. By his grace, we have had a glimpse of all these—we understand them somewhat. The salt doll went to fathom the sea, but never returned to give information—it just got dissolved. Who could then bring the information ? This is the summum-bonum of life.

Calcutta, 23rd May, 1923 A.D.

9th Jaishtha 1330 (Bengali year)

Wednesday, the 9th Day of the Bright Fortnight.

## CHAPTER NINE

### FROM THIS VERY MUD BLOOMS FORTH THE LOTUS

#### 1

It is the first shower after the summer. M is full of joy on seeing rain. The bhaktas have arrived in spite of the rain. Eight or ten new-comers are talking with M. It is about six in the after-noon.

M. (To the new-comers)—Just see, it is raining. It is His law. Otherwise, there will be no paddy. That's why rains. Even after seeing all this, what makes man proud, can you tell ? Thakur said to a bhakta : You need not think of all this. Call on Him secretly in a solitary place. Just say, 'Reveal Thyself'. You need not rack your brain with all this. It is His look-out, He who creates, preserves and destroys. All His arrangements are good. The world will be saved just by this rain, so it has been given. Just as rain, so also seasons He has made—when and what is needed. Were it only rains everything would be destroyed, that's why all other seasons. What do you say ? Can man do all this by his efforts ? If he cannot, his doership is no more. Where is That doer ?—he does not think of it even once. In this hot weather, one was feeling as if dying. Nobody, nowhere could stop the heat and yet one thinks oneself to be the doer ! He has done everything but someone comes out and says, 'I am the doer'. All this is the play of His Mahamaya. He Himself has created this illusion, otherwise the world could not go on. In this rain, in it can't you see His hand ?

"Though so weak, man can yet realize Him through this mind and intellect. From this very mud blooms forth the lotus. Just turning the corner. If you know their use the same mind & intellect that bind can also free you, the same poison that kills becomes the nectar of life. One should know its use. God Himself comes down as man to teach this very thing. Thakur has come so recently. He has shown the easiest of all paths. Go on treading it and you will soon reach. He said : You need not do so much. Just weep and call on Him secretly in a solitary place saying : 'Reveal Thyself, Father ?' Again he said to his intimate disciples : For you nothing else will be needed. By meditating on me alone it will be done. Something at least has to be done. When one does something His grace dawns. Then everything becomes clear."

It has stopped raining. The new bhaktas take leave to depart. It is evening. M begins to meditate. It is 8.15 p.m. M rises and goes to the verandah. He is to go upstairs to take his meals. He says to the bhaktas : 'All of you may please sing.' Sukhendu sings with the bhaktas : —So honey sweet the name of God! where did you get it, Nimaii ? After this, all sang with Brahmachari Ramesh : 'Victory, victory to the name of Ramakrishna ? Sing, O sing!' M returns and participates in this hymn of praise. Now the reading of the Kathamrita is taken up. Accompanied by a Vedantic sadhu, Ram has arrived at the Dakshineswar. After a little reading, M begins talking—

M.—Once a number of sadhus had come to the Panchavati. They went to Thakur's room. Thakur said, 'Well sirs. You perform the japa-dhyana without any desire for fruit, don't you ?' The sadhus said, 'Yes sir'. 'Whatever you do, you offer it to Narayana? Don't you?' Having been asked a second time, the sadhus still said, 'Yes'. The Gita also says the same thing : तत्कुरुते नदपणम् (9:27)

—Food, sacrifice, charity, austerities—perform these having offered their fruit to me first. Then nothing more. Then there will be no shackles. Saying so, he goes immediately to the smaller cot and leaning against the pillow begins to smile. Seeing this the sadhus whisper among themselves. This is what is called the state of parma-hansa.

“Thakur’s method of teaching was a different kind. See how he taught the sadhus ! They could not even know that they were being taught. Nobody can find fault with it. Another thing : he would refer to those who were favourites of the persons concerned. Talking to the Brahmos, he would mention the name of Vijay : ‘Vijay says so etc.’ This would serve two purposes—their reverence for Vijay would increase and they would learn into the bargain. Perhaps they would not have accepted Thakur’s word otherwise.”

He observes short silence. Then he resumes.—

“The boys from H. Bose’s family used to shoot at birds with their guns. They did so when he was alive. They stopped when asked by me to desist. Again they started shooting. Then it was a problem how to stop it. If they were not stopped, all the boys of the locality would turn as cruel. As I was thinking over it, it occurred to me that if I could find a Brahmo, the work would be done. My God ! As soon as I came out on the road I met an Old Brahmo friend. He immediately went to that house, complained to the ladies and forbade the killing of birds. The elders of the house said, ‘We did not know. The boys will not kill birds anymore.’ I stood on the road for full three quarters of an hour. He came and told me everything. It is the guru who does. Give your burden to him and be at peace.”

The evening-meditation is over. M is squatting on the floor of the room on the first floor with the bhaktas. A few sadhus have come from the Belur Math. A couple of sadhus have just rid themselves of the extremely adverse family circumstances. The bhaktas are talking of their renunciation and dispassion.

M. (To the bhaktas)—If one is sincere He sets everything right. What appears to be an insuperable difficulty to human intelligence also disappears by His will. The unthinkable, the unimaginable, and that which is even beyond dream, all these become easy. The path is cleared by His grace. That is why one should be sincere. All of them prayed sincerely, so it was done.

Amulya the Elder—Have all those sadhus who are in the Math forsaken the world sincerely ?

M.—It's not that sannyasa is the culmination. It is only taking the road. Taking it, it becomes easy to reach the goal. And besides is it possible to become perfectly sincere in one day ? It comes about by constant effort. The company of the sadhus helps to destroy bhoga. Then one begins to love God. By loving God, by being attracted towards Him, one is weaned from the other side. Then one does not like sense objects, one is not attracted by bhoga. Dhruva gained a kingdom but he could not gain contentment thereby. He prayed for the company of the holy. By keeping holy company one realizes that God is eternal and the world transient.

“With God-realization the world is forgotten. Nothing else occupies the mind. So many persons used to go to Thakur with different intentions—some intended to take to japa, others to dhyana or to recite hymns of praise. My God ! the moment they were in his presence, they would forget everything. Such is darshana. Reaching there

all quiet. On attaining God the mind rises above all worldly matters—just like the bee which when it sits on the flower has no other objective, intoxicated drinking honey. Then all quiet. Thakur used to tell a story:—A man wants to see the king. But the king lives beyond seven porticos. The aspirant crossing the first portico sees that a bulky, prosperous looking fellow is seated there. He thinks within : This is the king ? On enquiry he finds that he is not the king. He goes to the next portico. Here he sees another more prosperous person. On enquiry he finds again, this too is not the king. Proceeding in this manner the farther he goes the greater the grandeur he finds but on enquiry he is told everytime : This is not the king. Just 'no, no.' On reaching the seventh mansion, he sees the real king. Now no need to enquire. There all is quiet. On seeing God, all is quiet. Till God is seen one should make effort. Effort means embracing sannyasa, visiting the Math, being a sadhu. As one makes effort one becomes sincere. From the sannyasa and the brahmacharya ashramas it becomes easy to reach the goal. The goal is God. There are four ashramas : Brahmacharya (Celibacy), garhastha (house-hold), vanaprastha (retirement from household) and sannyasa (monastic). The first and the fourth make it easy. In the second it is very difficult, almost impossible. But as Jesus said : 'With men this is impossible ; but with God all things are possible' (Matthew 19:26) meaning thereby, God willing everything can happen as it happened to Janak and others. In the third ashrama, the vanaprastha, the body is worn out and the energy of the body and mind enfeebled. Then also it is difficult to attain.

"On seeing God, do you know what happens ? — One becomes as if a child of five, beyond the sway of gunas—just like crystal, it will look red placed before the habiscus flower and black before coal—beyond the three gunas. So we found Thakur.—On being asked his

name, he would reply : Some call me Bhattacharya, some paramahansa. He was not subject to any of the gunas. When he talked of brahmacharya it looked as if he was himself a brahmachari. When he would go to his village, all would say : 'Gadai has now come ; he is decorating his house ; he is going to be a householder'. And again, when he was with bhaktas, to some he appeared as a sannyasi, to others a paramahansa. He was not under the influence of any guna—child, crystal.

M. (To the bhaktas)—'When you come for the darshana of a sadhu you should bring some offering with you', he used to say. Why ? By doing so one would remember that one has served him. One should serve oneself gods and sadhus. This leaves a deep impression. Again Thakur would say to some of his bhaktas : 'You will buy it yourself.' What is not achieved by ten rupees, a much greater love than that results from an ordinary offering. Many of the bhaktas were poor, poor as a church mouse. That is why he would say : "Bring cardamom worth a pice or ice worth two. Or, at least do bring a myrobalan fruit.' At times, he would ask gratuitously : 'Tell me whether I am whole or part. Tell me my weight.' This means : The extent to which one understands him one will rise. 'He who will know me to be beyond the gunas will himself be so.' The Gita also says तरन्ति ते —one who knows Him will cross the ocean of the world. About 'weight' also he did not talk casually—it also has a significance.

"God has two departments : Vidyamaya and avidyamaya. It is the avidya-maya which agitates the mind. Ram Prasad once said, 'Pravritti, Nivritti Jaya. Nivrittire Sange Nibi—Of the two wives, Pravritti (Attachment) and Nivritti (Detachment) take Nivritti with you. Till then the mind is lying in ignorance.' It is the sphere of avidya (nescience). Again he said, "Come O Mind ? Let us go out for a walk under the Kali wish yielding tree.

Now attachment has changed into detachment—ignorance and nescience have been destroyed. Who but an avatara can make one understand this mystery ? Only Thakur can do it, not within the power of any one else. The extent to which one understands him one will rise. He himself would speak about himself to his intimate disciples : 'The indivisible Satchidananda who is beyond word and mind that has come down in human body.' That is why he said so many times : 'Verily, verily I swear unto you whosoever will think on me shall inherit my wealth even as a son does inherit his father's wealth. Just by disiring one can obtain this matchless wealth : Jnana-bhakti, viveka-varigya, prema, and samadhi (Knowledge, devotion, discrimination, dispassion, love and God-realization).

Calcutta, 25th May 1923 A.D.

11th Jaishtha 1330 (Bengali year)

Friday, the 10th Day of the Bright Fortnight.

## CHAPTER TEN

### IF HE WILLS HE CAN REVERSE THE COURSE

#### 1

Summer season, five in the afternoon. M is squatting in the room of the first floor of the Morton School. It is Saturday. So, many bhaktas have assembled, earlier. Lalit the Elder of Bhatapara, Harendra Mukherjee a teacher of the Morton School and others have come. As desired by M, Lalit is reading out the 'Salutation to the Ganga' मातः शैलसुता-सपत्नि and so on. Next Haren sings on the harmonium. He has a very sweet voice—

O Lord ! You are my all, the Support of my life-breath, the Essence of the essence. But for You, there is none I can call my own in the three worlds.

With the ending of the song come four or five persons from the Ghatal area of Maidnipur. From the context of the talk it becomes clear that there had been a lot of upsets in the family of one of them within the last seven months, there were some deaths too.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Yes, such a thing happens some times. When one is living in the world one has to prepare oneself for it in advance. Just see, what misfortunes within seven months ! He makes and then breaks. He does all for our good. There is nothing inauspicious in Him. His name is *mangalmaya* (all good). He draws one towards Himself by causing misfortunes. Otherwise, people forget Him in their worldly life. Holding Him, live in the household. Otherwise sorrows become unbearable.

able. By taking refuge in Him and living in the world one is not so much overwhelmed by sorrows. Just see how many upsets within seven months !

“We have also been living in Mihijam for the last seven months. (Pointing towards a person) He was also there. There we saw cows, goats, birds and beasts—just eating and eating the whole day (demonstrating by bending his head) like this. Again in between, effort at procreation goes on. When tired, they lie down and chew the cud. All this He gets done. Knowing it to be so is freedom from anxiety. But every difficult it is. He would not let you know it. Ego comes one knows not from where ! There was a frog along with its two young ones under a canister. No sooner was the canister lifted than the mother hopped and covered one of them, as if saying : Kill me if you must but not them. Just see, what a maternal affection ! As soon as the kid of the goat was being lifted in the arms there appeared the mother, unafraid. Who gives this maternal affection ? The Chandi says : या देवी सर्वभूतेषु मातृरूपेण संस्थिता —She resides in all beings in the form of maternal affection. Having lived there this time, I have seen Her benevolent hand. We are just like dancing puppets. He makes us dance. He who is near can see the hand of the puppet-man. He who is far cannot see that. Going near this time, I have seen it. His benevolent hand on all—animal or man. The only difference : He has given man the power to call on Him. By going into solitude, one sees all this. Have you been that side ? There are big plains and small hills. The sun-set over the hills is so inspiring. In winter, we used to witness the sunrise from behind the trees, and used to think : On seeing this very sun, the Gayatri came forth from the lips of the rishis : तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यम् and another thing is also there”.

M—Not only a clear sky, but innumerable stars and the Great Bear. We used to see them daily. No need of a watch was felt at night ; we would determine time by looking at the Great Bear. Here too, we have the Great Bear. (Jokingly) A fellow asked another ! Does the moon appear in your village too ? (Everybody laughs) Yes brother, yes. Every poet sees a different kind of moon, doesn't he ? In reality it is the same moon everywhere. (To himself) There is no difference between man and animal except that man has the power to call on Him, that's all. (To bhaktas) Thakur used to come to Calcutta by cab. Looking out of the window he would notice the passers by and say : Everybody I see has downward looking eyes. Nobody has upward looking eyes, that is, no mind in God. Rarely one or two such persons are seen. Looking downwards means looking to one's belly. This keeps them always busy, where is the time to think on God ?

“But now it is a golden chance. The avatara has come. That is why the fields too are flooded with pole-deep water. Take as much of it as you like. Any amount of godliness is available. But who makes efforts for it ? (Fixing his eyes on the picture of Thakur on the wall) Such an ideal is before us. But people do not want. They have no time for it.”

M (To the grief-stricken bhakta)—But sadhus call on Him always ; they think on Him. A sannyasi and a new brahmachari came here. The latter was a great scholar, a gold medallist. The sannyasi was moderately educated, whatever he could learn in the village—the three R's—Reading, writing and 'rithmetic. This is enough in a village. But what a great knowledge he had ! I was struck dumb on hearing him. How did he get so much of knowledge, so much of education ? All he got was an elementary education in the village school, engaged as he is, always in the meditation on God. When one

thinks on God, everything follows automatically—secular learnings. But, in the brahmachari I did not find this. And yet he had received so much of this (University) education.

M (To the bhaktas)—The knowledge which leads to the realization of God is *Vidya*, all else is avidya. What avails knowing so much of the Vedas, holy books and sciences ? That which leads to the attainment of God is vidya alone. He who knows this, his is the real education. The rest of it is all money-earning education. What does it give?—Name, fame, wealth and so on which only whet one's appetite for enjoyment. That's why Thakur used to say : Those who are only learned fly very high but their gaze is fixed to the cremation ground. Another story he told us :—A person was in need of a Bhagavata-pundit. His friend said, 'There is a pundit of a very high order, but he has very little leisure—farming, cultivation and so much else he has to do. The man heard and said, 'No I don't need such a ploughing pundit. If he spends all his time in this way, when does he think on God ? Without meditation on God, without tapasya, the hidden meaning of the shastras cannot be understood.

M (grief-stricken)—Thakur used to say : The great of this sphere are a different kind. He whose mind remains plunged in the lotus-feet of the Lord is only great. And who is great in the eyes of the world ? He who has a big household, buildings, money and property or different learnings. Here it is not so in this sphere—just the opposite. He who is a devotee of God is great. Such a great man was Keshab Babu. Even him Thakur does not call great. He said to him in the mansion of Yaddu Mullick in such a big gathering : I am not able to believe what you say. You live with woman and gold. Had Narada or Shukadeva said so I would have

believed. If this is so about Keshab Sen what to speak of others ! Great in Thakur's estimation were Narada and Shukdeva.

M (After a momentary silence, to the bhaktas)—And there was another distinguished graduate, a great scholar. He was on a steamer in the Ganga. With him was a friend. He was drawing Rs. 150/- a month; had not married. Having served for three or four years, he joined the Madras Math. He is going on a steamer and says to his companion, 'By thinking of moral obligations there cannot be a religious life.' He himself had an unprovided mother, brothers and others. But he came out. He asks his friend also to come out. Thinking so much of obligations makes it impossible. One follows the other, there is no end to it. Only with the advent of Thakur one hears all these things and sees such people. What an ideal—God first, everything else afterwards ! Thakur said: There is a slender line. This side of it is animality, humanity, and so on. On crossing it divinity. This line is that of bhoga. On leaving bhoga one becomes divine. These people are eligible for that divinity. That's why a big chance for those who are not married, not entangled in the world. Just by desiring they can attain the Life Everlasting.

"Thakur used to think day and night how to make the bhaktas worthy of the Life Everlasting, how to make them attain to divinity. Those who did not marry should not get entangled was his effort. And how should those who had married get leisure, how should their karmas be lessened, how should they have the facility to think on Him was the advice he gave them. How much of anxiety for his intimate disciples ! To them he showed the straight path. He said : Just by thinking on me it will be done. Nothing else will have to be done. See, how easy he has made it. Just by thinking on Him will do. The rest will be done by him. Who can undertake this burden except God ? Who has such a strength

within him ? The same I see in the Gita मामेकं शरणम ब्रज (Gita 18:66)—Only think on me. I shall bear all the burden. But for God none can say so.

“He indicated the way how to get leisure. He said: After begetting one or two children the husband and wife should live like brother and sister. With more of children work will increase, there will be no leisure—earning money, bringing up children, getting them married, and so many duties. Even after getting them married such a lot of anxiety ! Even when the daughter has left for her father-in-law’s house how much of worry for her ! He would advise : Share not the same bed. Let even the warmth of the partner’s body not touch you. And lest one should say to himself : I live with a woman yet do not indulge in intercourse with her, he fore-warned not to share the bed. A bhakta had some bhoga left in him. He was sent back home. And on the other hand he (Thakur) went on praying to the Divine Mother at mid-night : ‘Ma! Pray don’t let him fall.’ The bhaktas do not get time to think on God. The whole day they have to be busy with different works. That is why he had said : Rise and meditate on Him at 3 a.m. In that case there will be no interference. It is all quiet then. How much of anxiety he had for the bhaktas !”

## 3

M—(To Shukalal)—Men in the past would hire a boat and go to Kashi as soon as they were fifty. Now there are so many facilities and yet they don’t want to go. Well, is it that affection has increased these days ? (All laugh) So perhaps nobody wants to budge a little. (To the bhaktas) People get so much immersed in worldly affairs that they completely forget God. It is to dispel this forgetfulness that He has to take up a human-body and appear from time to time. Then only the bhaktas awake.

In the meanwhile the Doctor, Manoranjana, Yogen, Sukhendu and many other bhaktas have assembled.

M (To Shukalal)—He used to say that after one or two children are born one should make provision for their rice and dal and take to meditation. Should one spend the whole life in working and working? One labours constantly since morning. People praise him saying, 'Oh, what a hard-working man!' But why all this?—For enjoyment, not for God. It will bring money and wealth, name and fame, servants and maids. cab and four; it will mean giving of splendid social presents and one would be able to afford dainty dishes—for this reason, not for the sake of God, not at all. And how cruel are the members of the family! He works so hard but they do not give it the least consideration. If anybody points it out they say: Well, everybody works so hard. What does it matter? And those who work hard also feel a pleasure in it: They will be able to give their wives and children good food, good clothes—just for this. But why will simple food not do? Alas! This body wearing and soul killing labour is undertaken for the sake of enjoyment, not for God.

"That is why Thakur said to Vivekananda: Rice and dal can be arranged, nothing more. His mother and brothers were in difficulties regarding food and clothes. So he implored Thakur to plead for him to Mother Kali. Mother then said the above to him. This means that he whom she loves is not subjected to different wants. For him, the arrangement for rice and dal is already made. The less the wants, the more one gets the time to think on God. Plain living and high thinking is the ideal.

"Having made provision for dal and rice one should repair to some solitary place, this he said. By living alone for two or three days one sees a world of difference. This is called partial sannyasa. The body will perish,

then everything will be left behind—thinking this, one should come out.

“A bhakta asked Thakur how long one would have to work for one’s family. Thakur replied: ‘Till they mature, that is, are able to work for their living. Then let them do what they will.’ I saw animals and birds: Till they are young they are fed by the mother. When they grow and go to their mother to suck at the breast or touch its mouth with theirs, they are turned away as if to say : You are grown-ups now, you know how to peck. Go and work for your living. Animals and birds do not feed their young-ones when they are grown up, but with man it is otherwise, though not in the West. There when the son is grown up they do not let him sit idle and eat—let him earn his living. Otherwise how will there be leisure ? Even after a whole life’s labour there is no end to work.

“When asked whether the effort to add to one’s earnings was right, Thakur said: Yes, if it is for the world of vidya. The world of vidya means that one has God-realization as one’s aim.—if it is used to serve gods, sadhus, bhaktas & poor people—not merely for serving one’s kith and kin, not for house and building, not for a chaise and pair, not for dainty dishes. Balaram Babu used to do this. He would say: ‘Why should I spend so much on them ?’ He would serve gods, sadhus and the poor more. That is why many of his relations were discontented with him. After his death they started squandering. Thakur had said to Hriday Mukherjee: ‘Why do you feed these worthless people ? I leave your house forthwith.’ He had invited his relatives. No trace of service to sadhu-bhaktas. Earning just for so many good-for-nothing persons ! In that case, one should not add to one’s wealth. One may earn more if one remembers sadhus, bhaktas, deities. Bhaktas are those who are always thinking on God. May be, in the nearby house a poor person is dying of starva-

tion but no heed is paid to it. On the other hand, in one's own house a six or seven course dinner is getting ready. And in spite of it one says: This or that is not done well. Then throw it away. On the other hand, give but just a little sweet to sadhu bhaktas they are happy with it. Give a little to the poor to eat and they are all satisfied and so grateful. Somebody from the Brahmasamaj said, 'All men are equal.' Thakur heard it and said, 'Yes, one spends ten thousand rupees on the marriage of one's children while those in the neighbouring house cannot even afford to eat rice and dal. How are they equal then?'

M (To Haren)—We saw in the Jamatara Ashrama that a man was adjusting the rope of sadhus' cots. We said to him 'You are indeed a good man. You are serving sadhus. He replied, 'No sir. There is no time to think of all this. I am working to earn.' I was reminded of the story of the wolf. The wolf had said to Rama and Lakshmana, 'I have no time to think of Sita. I am busy day and night with my food.' After the abduction of Sita, when asked by Rama and Lakshmana about the news of Sita the wolf had said so. The news of Sita, in other words 'news about the higher life, about God.' One has no time for it. Men are always busy with their stomachs and creature comforts.

"A colonel, he too lived that side. What a love he had for the poor ! How he served them, irrespective of their caste or creed! People are walking on the road. No sooner are they asked about him they immediately stop and say: 'He is a rarity, sir. A god! Even a hundred mouths cannot describe what he is. Somebody is seen lying ill on the road. He would take him home and personally nurse him. No selfish motive, what a compassion! He was aware what the higher life is.

"Here is another case of service to sadhus. The

Jamatara Ashrama stands on a deserted maidan with not a man there. Close by runs a road. The night fell. Some six or seven bullock-carts entered the Ashrama for shelter. Two or three sadhus living there used to carry out devotions. What else could they do? Whatever little dal and rice there was in the Ashrama was cooked and served to them through the night. What they would eat the next day they did not know. This attitude of service because they were sadhus. Had they been householders they would have been disgusted. Why, the former are engaged in the thought of the higher life day and night.

“And we heard about another occurrence. It was the day on which the temple of the Holy Mother had been consecrated. Many a sadhu and bhakta had assembled in Jayrambati. On returning a householder bhakta fell ill on the road. Sadhus were also coming that way. One of them said to his companion :“ He will have to be carried in a cab. If you have no money here it is.” One of the sadhus said, “Return it on reaching your village.” And another interrupting him said, “No, he need not return ; carry him carefully.” Ah! They were sadhus, that’s why. The householders would mostly not ask such inconvenient questions. Who knows one might have to pay from one’s pocket. Living in household makes one deceitful. One cannot give away in spite of oneself. By doing so one’s own share and that of one’s family members would be reduced. For sadhus वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् —The whole world is one’s family.

“One day, Thakur was in bhava. While walking, he takes the Chanak Road, lost in himself. As soon as he comes upon the Trunk Road, he jumps up with joy on seeing the road and says: Ah! It is like the heart of the sadhu, straight and expansive. The heart of the sadhu is large and not selfish. On the other hand, the householder, by discriminating between mine and thine, pollutes

his mind. He becomes deceitful in spite of his desire to be good."

## 4

It is evening now. A hurricane lamp has been brought in. Clapping his hands and saying 'Hari-bol, Hari-bol' M plunges in contemplation. The bhaktas are also meditating. After the meditation, Mohan sings a song at the behest of M—

'Yonder the Abode of Joy,

Of superb beauty, beyond the ocean of the world, enveloped in celestial light.'

Thereafter all sing together—"Sing, O sing : Victory, victory to the holy name of Ramakrishna'. Now, several bhaktas take leave to depart. Again, the conversation is resumed.

Jagabandhu—Well sir, which were the places Thakur lived in and for how long ?

M—He was in the Kuthi for 16 years, during 1855-71, in the room by the side of the Ganga, with a verandah in front and then steps. Thakur's mother also lived in the same room. When Akshay departed, he vacated that room. From 1871 to '85, for 14 years he was in the room where you see his bed now. In 1885, when he fell ill, he first shifted to a rented house. Then having lived in the house of Balaram Babu for a few days he went to the Shyamapukur House. In 1886, he was in the Kashipore Garden House. Here he lived for about ten months. It is here that he left his mortal frame.

M (To Kartik Babu)—Well doctor, What is the news of Vinay Babu ?

Doctor—He has pain in his hand and head. He slept at night with his head resting on his hand.

A Bhakta—Why ! It is better to put a cloth over the hand and then rest the head over it.

M—Yes, that is also a good idea. And one may spread the blanket, rest the head over a brick and cover the body with a warm cloth.

“(To Haren but meant for some one else)—They all live in the Math in the attitude of tapasya, you know, (to all) those who renounce, control their passions through austerities. Some others do it through bhoga. This again results in having children. Then one gets entangled, no leisure. Only hard work day and night. They don't think on Him. To kill the soul for their happiness ! That is why Thakur used to say, ‘When one has one or two children one should come out having made a provision for their dal and rice’. These are the fruits—the fruits of bhoga. Isn't it ? That's why provision may be made for their dal and rice—nothing more than **that**. What a botheration ! Marry and you have children. Then their education and marriage—where is the time ? Transitory all these are ; death will bring an end to all. Nobody thinks of death. So many die daily but even then nobody awakes. One thinks that only he will die who is to die. One forgets one's own death. Death can come this very moment and wash away everything. Who will accompany then ? Thakur used to repeat this very often—he had realized it so deeply.”

M gradually began to talk excitedly. He again started depicting the dreadful picture of the householder's life which he had painted earlier in the evening.

M said, “The householder willingly accepts the chains of slavery of the wordly life. By his own will he can also free himself. Freedom is the very essence of man.”

Shukalal—Well then, what will happen to the fruit of karma? One has to enjoy or suffer it.

M—The same thing was said to Thakur by a person : The karma that one is doing will have to be borne, isn't it ? As if it is nothing, a most trifling matter, of no significance. Thakur replied in this way : 'What are you saying ? If he wills He can reverse everything.' I feel that if it is not talked about (fruit of karma, wordly enjoyment and so on) people will not renounce bhoga. That is why all this was said. If He wills He can reverse everything—not to speak of bhoga. 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible'. Jesus said to his devotees on seeing them downcast : Don't be afraid. I have taken up your burden. Live in joy  
 तत् प्रसादात् परां शान्तिम् स्थानम् प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् (Gita 18:62)  
 —By His grace, you will attain supreme peace and the eternal abode.

5

Now prasada is brought from the Thakur Bari, the shrine of Thakur. The bhaktas are taking it in the long southern verandah. A bhakta from Medinipur enters the room quickly and narrates his personal problems to M.

The Bhakta from Medinipur (To M)—Sir, why does the mind become so ? It remains all right for some days but then it goes down again.

M—Why do you worry for it ? Pray to Him. He will set everything right. The mind will always behave in this manner—this is its very nature. Girish Ghosh had also put the same question : Why does it go down ? Thakur had replied : While one lives in the world, clouds must rise. By fearing waves, you cannot stop them. The mind does behave in this manner. Why do you fear it ? Tell Him, pray to Him and He will set everything right. After surrendering unto Him, you will not have to worry any more.

The Bhakta from Medinipur—I have not been initiated.

Swami Brahmananda had promised but he departed. I also fell ill, so I have not been able to get initiation.

M—Just see this. It is He who cares for you. Had it not been so how could you have approached a sadhu? Brahmanandaji did not invite you. It was God Himself who took you to him.

The Bhakta from Medinipur—What shall I do now? He has departed.

M—Ask Him who had sent you to him. He will arrange everything; He will tell you the way. Ours is only to surrender unto Him. He is thinking for everybody. Thakur used to say: There are three classes of men in the world—one class that of yogis. They are always immersed in His thought—like the bee who would sit on nothing but a flower. And the second, they who have both yoga and bhoga, for example the Pandavas. For them too He thinks. Sri Krishna is always accompanying them. The third, those who are only bhogis. Does He think less for them? No He looks after them too. The Chandi says that He resides as Mother in all elements. So He thinks for all His children like a mother. Even a moth or an insect is not beyond His sight. Thakur said with his own mouth: It is the Mother Herself (who has become all). It is She again who resides in all, yet the heart of the bhakta is Her special seat. Just see, how even before birth, the mother's breast is provided with milk. By giving the sun, life is preserved. How He thinks even for the animals, just see. In summer when the grass dries up, He irrigates it so that the grass may grow and they feed on it and save themselves. We have nothing to think. Everything has already been set right. He knows all about us before we were born and also everything after we die.

“God alone is the guru. It is He who initiates, manifesting Himself as a man. You have to listen to one

man and seek the company of sadhus. It is not proper to argue with sadhus. Just by seeing them one is awakened. They have known that God is real and the world transitory. There is, however, a risk in the company of sadhus—different men have different views. If you listen to everything, there is a possibility of confusion. That is why you should listen to one man and keep company of the holy. Here is a nice story: There was an attack on a kingdom. The engineers gave their suggestions. The commander-in-chief gave his own theory, and the royal priest talked of the *purashcharan*. What one knew one said. Which path was now the poor rajah to tread? So one should listen to only one person. He has only to be listened to who is always thinking of you, who has taken up your burden. If you listen to everybody you get into complications."

M (To the bhaktas)—One should keep the company of sadhus. These people go daily to the Math. They have monthly tickets. You also go to the Math, I believe.

The bhakta from Medinipur—Sir, I have not been going there for many days now. There was illness and disease and then Swami Brahmananda had also departed. But I do visit Dakshineswar. Ramalal Dada is so kind.

M—One should keep the company of sadhus; one must. It is not proper to enter into a controversy with them. Just seeing them is education. By seeing them the realisation comes that they are trying to think on Him with their full mind. They are standing on the road. Seeing them, one would like to do the same thing. But one should follow the advice or teachings of one man. One should compare what others say with what he says.

"If you live in the world you will have both pleasure and pain. The root of it all is the body. Having a body you must have storms and stresses. When one has seen God, there is no more fear, then everything cools down.

One goes beyond the three gunas. One becomes crystal like. It takes the colour of that on which it is placed. A wordly life can be lived after seeing God. Then you do not feel pleasure as pleasure and pain as pain. You no longer feel pure or impure. You have anger but only for the sake of appearance. Thakur used to say: The anger and other passions of a sadhu are like a burnt rope—they can be flown away by a whiff. Perhaps he is dressed fashionably with a watch and a gold chain. You may carry them away, he will have no objection; he is like a child of five. From outside he shows so much haughtiness—he has to enact such and such legislation or punish such and such person. All this he does for the running of his state. Inwardly he knows that he is nothing. In the state of the paramahansa, one is not under the control of any guna.

“All these troubles and tribulations that one comes across are mere appearances—just water-bubbles—seen for a while but soon disappearing in water. On recognizing one’s own essence, pain and sorrow are no more. One’s own essence, that is Satchidananda Purusha—He has neither birth nor death, neither pleasure nor pain, immutable and beyond the three gunas. Within this apparent man there is the real man. For example, in Kashi there is the real image of Annapurna. If you want to see it you have to pay. It is covered all over. It is a stone image. The outer mask is made of gold. Just lift the unreal and one can see the real one. In this very way, within the apparent man there is the real man. Recognize him and then there is no fear.”

## 6

M (To the bhaktas)—Kith and kin, sons and daughters, these are all different forms of appearance—just bubbles in water. I am so and so, son of so and so, this is my house—these are all unreal like the bubble, they have no

existence. We see men die, their dead bodies carried on the road. In spite of it there is no awakening in us. We think only they die who are to die, we shall not die. Such is the play of the Maha-Maya. That is why Thakur said : Entrapped by the five elements, Brahman weeps and laments. In other words, on taking up a body even God bewails, having fallen into the hands of Maya—for example Rama, Krishna, Christ. This first World War, what is it ? So many forms have come to an end. It is too 'great' a thing for us to see. We therefore say that they only die who are to die.

M (To the bhakta from Medinipur)—Why do you worry ? He himself will arrange everything for you. He is thinking for everybody. While returning from his native village, Thakur would run on the fields of Burdwan to see if there was any living-being there. There he would see the ants moving in a row. And he would exclaim : God has made provision for their food even here. He has become all—man, moth, insect, animals, bird—all is He. Inside, outside, above, below everywhere is He. It is He who residing within makes all move. And then it is He who provides for everybody, maintains everybody. You needn't have any worry. Everything has been set right before hand. We cannot understand it, therefore so much of pain and sorrow. On God-realization it becomes clear that all this is a conjurer's show—in fact, they have no existence. That is why we should rest surrendering ourselves unto Him.

M (To a bhakta)—Can't you to go to the Math daily ? The office hour is half past eleven. One can return at 8.30. By keeping the company of the sadhus you will get rid of all botherations. There is no way but this.

The bhakta from Medinipur—Sir, with this feeble body I cannot perform much of sadhan—bhajan.

M— कर्षयन्त इन्द्रियग्रामम् —that is, performing sadhana by straining the body and the senses—this is done by people of asuric (demonic) nature—perhaps they would keep their bodies dipped in water in the cold weather. Why should men with sattavic nature do that? They think it will come about by itself—by dhyana, japa and prayer, having taken refuge in Him.

Harendra —But by providing enjoyment to the body the desire for pleasure is not satisfied. The more one indulges in it the more the appetite grows.

M—No. They have such a faith that by His grace it can happen thus. Why should one unnecessarily torture the body? Firm faith. The Gita says : आत्मानं नावसादयते —It is not proper to depress the soul, the mind ; in other words, the mind gets depressed by austerity.

“One should take to sadhan and bhajan. One should persist. What does it matter if one does not see God in one life. And what can be achieved in one life? अनेक जन्म संसिद्धस्ततो याति परांगतिम् —After the tapasya of several lives does one realize Him. Never mind if it is not possible in one life—it shall be in ten lives. Therefore, why should one give up bhajan? One should persist. Does a true farmer give up farming because of the failure of his crop for a year? He will persist in farming. Whether one succeeds or not, one must persist. Now it is a great chance. Those who do not attain now will never attain. Hasn't the avatara come down? This is the golden chance. Now one should be up and doing.

“But, then, does the mind easily accept the company of sadhus? It creates various kinds of difficulties, one has to force it, push it. Only those who have will-power can go there. They are powerful men. Pushing off hundreds of difficulties they will seek the company of the

holy. One should be up and doing—then alone it becomes possible. A great chance there is now ! What is needed is uncompromising obstinacy. Thakur used to narrate a story about the purchase of bullocks :—The bullock which stands up with a start as soon as its tail is touched is liked by the farmer. Such a bullock is worth rupees seventy-five. On the other hand, the bullock which inclines restfully when touched is not bought. It is worth rupees five. Similarly, those who do it with a crash, do not yield to pleasurable sensation ; it will be possible for them only. No compromise. The compromising spirit will not do.”

Calcutta, 26th May 1923

12th Jaishtha 1330 (Bengali year)

Saturday, the 11th Day of the Bright Fortnight.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### CHARITY OF JNANA, BHAKTI, PREMA— THE BEST CHARITY

#### 1

The evening is past. M is walking up and down in the long verandah of the first floor. He comes into the room and sits down. A mat is spread over the floor. Shukalal, Doctor, Vinay, Rakhal, Sukhendu and Yogen have arrived. Within a short while arrive Suren Ganguli, Durgapada, Nalini the younger, Sudhir, Virinchi, Haren Master, Amrit and other devotees. A sadhu from the Vidyapeeth had already been waiting. M is talking to him.

Sadhu (To M.)—Recently I went to Decca. I stayed there for four or five days. I met the people of my family but I could not go to the Math.

M.—You have done well, they will not be worried. It is said that if one man in a family becomes a sadhu fourteen generations of that family are released. It means that one's kith and kin keep thinking of him. And thus meditation on God goes on without one's knowing it, for bhakta and Bhagavana are identical. Thakur had said : The sugar-candy bread, whatever way you may eat it, will taste as sweet.

A Bhakta—I have had news today that the wife and son of a friend of mine have died, one after the other.

M. (with an apparent surprise)—What did you say ?  
Such a complete ruin !

Seeing M's attitude, the sadhu laughed loudly. Some of the brahmachari bhaktas also joined in this laughter.

M. (To the sadhus)—You people would, of course, laugh. You have never trodden that path, never. We cannot afford that. We live in the domain of love and affection. What intimate talks, how long together, what hopes ! What a friend we have in the wife ! And she departs. And the son too, whom one has been seeing for years together, whom one brings up so lovingly. Is it an ordinary sorrow ? The daughter of a bhakta fell into the fire and died. The bhakta was then playing on the tabla. Hearing this Thakur said : "What are you saying ? The daughter died and he felt no grief ?" There is a poem of Tagore : The Suicide of Tara. The fire burning within but no expression outside. This also happens. And again, once a bhakta suffered a bereavement—his son died. When Thakur was told about it, it appeared as if he was overwhelmed with sorrow. He tried to console the father in many a different way. He said that if Arjuna also had experienced such a sorrow on the death of Abhimanyu what of ordinary people ! Ravana's bones developed holes from grief at the loss of his sons. At first he (Thakur) shows so much sympathy, but later administers the medicine. He goes into bhava and begins to sing Dasharathi Rai's song—

O Jiva ! Get ready for the battle. Death has entered your house in battle array. Mounting the chariot of devotion, bearing the quiver of jnana, bending the bow of your tongue with the bow-string of love, aim the brahma-astra—(the arrow, consecrated by Brahma, a sure weapon), that is, the name of the Mother of the Universe—at him (Death).

M.—You are mourning. You too will have to depart after a while. Get ready for it. (To the bhaktas) They will, of course, laugh. They have never trodden

that path. We cannot afford to do that. Having lived together for long, the mind gets entangled with love and affection. It so happens that even the birds and beasts in pain move the heart. One day I brought something down from the room of the third floor to the first. I noticed that it was full of ants. I brushed aside the ants with my hand. My God ! I instantly felt : Ah, what have I done ? They will not be able to find their holes. Then picking them by hand I placed them where they had been before. We can't afford that. They will, of course, laugh.

Master Harendra (Laughing)—That was done for doing good. What harm is there ?

M. (Seriously)—No, this too is the cause of bondage. The Gita says : न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे (2:20).—The atman is indestructible, the destruction of the body is inevitable. This is the unalloyed truth.

Harendra—Then if somebody suffers or thrives by killing another, all this is nothing.

M.—Yes, right of course but one becomes aware of it after God-realization, after samadhi. Thakur used to say : Sometimes my state is such that killing and being killed, both appear the same. Since I am not the body why grieve if the body goes ? But it can't be so with us. The beginners, that is to say those who have gurus should have compassion, charity, and affection.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Charity means giving away of cereals, money-making education, discrimination, dispassion, knowledge, devotion and love. The highest of all is the gift of knowledge, devotion and love. Then comes secular education and then gift of grains. Above the gift of grains there is one more, the gift of life. This is also included in the gift of grains. Also, a person is sinking in water or burning in fire, saving this man. Education

for money is also meant for the body. Money would be made through education, which would bring comfort to the body. However mind and intellect are sharpened by secular education. Through it one may get a clue to Brahmagvidya, that is God. God is for ever, the world transitory, this understanding may come. That is why the place of secular education is only next to Brahmagvidya. Ordinarily money making education turns out to be education for the comfort of the body. The attitude of a class of people is शरीरम् आद्यम् खलु धर्मं साधनम् — that is 'Body first, religion and God after.' Giving the mind to the body, the body turns itself into God ultimately, as happened to Virochana. Thakur himself never took a step on that path. He used to say : I don't ask for physical comforts, Ma! I don't ask for wordly recognition, Ma ! I don't ask for the eight occult powers, Ma! I don't ask for a hundred occult powers, either Ma! Give me, pray, pure devotion at Your lotus feet—pure, firm, immovable and motiveless. Chaitanya Deva too used to say the same. He would never raise the question of the pleasure or pain of the body. He would only say : Repeat the name of Hari. All sorrows will disappear.

"The people of Bharata had understood it thoroughly. They would work on the fields and repeat the name of Hari. That is why the rishis, renouncing all, would bestow prema-bhakti (love and devotion). The westerners have solely taken to bhoga. They have only one objective, how to gain more of sense pleasures, their only effort. The railway steamer, telegram, telephone, all these are directed towards bodily comfort. Commerce, industry, agriculture, hospitals, dispensaries, medicines and such other things are all for the sake of this body. The same with the radio and aeroplane. The entire science is being utilized for physical comforts. To love the Lord with the whole mind, this exhortation of Christ is not heeded by anybody. The effort of the missionaries is also going in vain.

“To be born in Bharata is the result of a long tapasya. On being born here, one's blood imbibes the sanskaras of this land. Look at Gandhi Maharaj. He is engaged in politics, but he has spiritualized it (as a way to realize God). He himself is a faqir. Where will one find such an ideal ? One day, I went for a dip in the Ganga. I saw a group of rustics. The chief man in the group was distributing a pice to each after the bath in the Ganga for giving to the Oriya Panda. Seeing this, it seemed as if the Sanatana Hindu Dharma had appeared in the physical form. In which country can you find it ? This charity with God as the ideal, such religious festivities all the year round in the name of God ! Where else is found such a thing ? There is more of this simple faith in villages. It is gradually decreasing in cities. Only villagers are observing these religious practices.

“To be born in Bharata is itself a good fortune. To add to it, now there is a special opportunity. Thakur has come, God Himself has descended as an avatara. Now there is a great chance for the jivas ! Is there little sorrow ? Distressed at the sufferings of the jiva, He comes down to relieve him. (To a bhakta) you understand, thinking on Him will do. He the avatara—He himself says so, not we.

“स्वयंचैव ब्रवीषि मे (Gita 10:13)—What shall we say ? What does our saying matter ? Can ten seers of milk be put in a pot of one seer ? Thakur himself said, ‘Satchidananda Himself has come in this body.’”

## 2

M. (To the bhaktas)—It is this doership that is the root of all troubles. What makes us say that we are the doers ? Look at this body. How much machinery has He installed in it—the spinal chord, the digestive apparatus, the brain and what not ! So much has been done by

Him but we call ourselves the doers. This doership vanishes the moment this machine is out of gear. Sadhana is needed. He is the doer and I the non-doer—to understand this is the function of sadhana. Sadhana means the effort to understand one's own-self—sitting in solitude and thinking over : Who am I ? What is the purpose of my birth ? Why death ? What is this universe ? Who made it ? Why this pain and suffering ? Which is the way to get rid of this suffering ? Is eternal happiness, eternal peace a possibility ?—To sit down in solitude and think over all this. By meditating in this way, one realizes at the end that God Himself has become the jiva, the universe and the twenty-four elements—all. Again, He moves everything from within. When one takes refuge in Him and prays He reduces the doership. No sooner the doership is reduced than there is peace and joy.

M. (To a householder bhakta)—Thakur used to say : Those who live in family should live like brother and sister after the birth of one or two children. Then the husband and wife should together read the Ramayna, the Mahabharata, the Bhagavata and other holy books. To live always in the spiritual plane—like two servants of God.

M. (To the bhaktas)—A bit of sadhana is necessary. Had it not been so why should have great men taken to it ? He Himself needs nothing. Even Thakur, what was the need for him to take to sadhana ? What was the need of sadhana or of anything for him ? God Himself had incarnated in human form. And yet why did he practise such hard sadhana for twelve years ? For teaching the humanity so that seeing him others may also do the same. A little of sadhana is a necessity.

“All men are drowned in Maya. The avatara comes and places an ideal before them. He comes himself and brings sadhus with him. Seeing their sadhana others

are awakened. He breaks a clod with a clod, fries fish in fish oil. Sri Krishna did such wonderful acts. At last this is what he said to Uddhava, 'All this is nothing that has been done so far. Go to the Badrika Ashrama and plunge yourself in His contemplation'."

M remained silent for a while. Then a bhakta began to sing at M's desire.

"My neighbours are raising a scandal, casting aspersions on me because of Gaur.

O' the Darling of my heart ! How can I tell ?  
To whom can it be told ? I am dying of shame.

The Doctor and Jagabandhu are singing :—Victory, victory to the name of Ramakrishna ? Sing, O sing ! The song ended M says, 'Hemendra Maharaj has come. What shall we offer to please him. Let us read out the Devi Bhagavata to him'. The book was opened at the chapter 'Dispassion of Shukadeva'. A bhakta reads :—

Shukadeva says: Father, what is happiness unmixed with pain in this world ? Sense pleasure is called painful pleasure by the jnanis. So, that cannot be the unmixed happiness....Father, seeing this serpent-like world, I am frightened—where is happiness for man without the meditations on self ? He who has been able to overcome Maya he is really learned and a man of knowledge ; only his study of scriptures is fruitful. I want that knowledge.

M.—Shukadeva the embodiment of jnana, he has no interest in the wordly way of living. That's why he is inclined to hear the text on Liberation. Deep dispassion, vairagya he has ; so he looks at the world as a serpent, in other words, the cause of bondage. Thakur used to say : In this state, the world appears like a death-well, and the kith and kin like venomous serpents. Forms of illusion they are all, isn't it ? Beautifully did he say : The learning of pundits lost in affection for wife and

children is in vain. (Laughing) Thakur talked about the ploughing pundit of the Bhagavata who had many lands and farms. And he said : The merely learned appear nothing more than straw to me. Reason ? —For, their gaze is fixed on the cremation ground—in woman and gold. Discrimination and dispassion there must be. In this lies one's own good. Besides, others will also listen to you. Otherwise you may talk and talk, nobody will listen. So, Shukadeva said : All these people are sick physicians trying to cure others. The reading continues :—Vyasa Deva replied, 'O son, the household is neither the cause nor the place of bondage. Living in the house-hold adopting reverence, truthfulness and purity and mentally renouncing all, man can attain liberation. The scripture also says : First Brahmacharya, then Grihastha, next Vanaprastha and lastly Sannyasa—these to be taken up one after the other. O my son, in order to gain victory over the senses take a wife and in old age take to tapasya. That is how the knower of the shastras teaches.

M.—This is the general law—to enter the ashramas one after the other. But, there is a special one : यदहरेव विरजेत् तदहरेव प्रव्रजेत् गृहाब्दा वनाब्दा । —that is also there. The former way of thinking is possible in the state of mild dispassion. In the extreme state of dispassion there is no such consideration. And why should it not be possible in the house-hold ? But very difficult it is : —वार्धक्ये तप अतिष्ठेत्—To take to tapasya in the old age ! For whom this arrangement ? It is for him who has a very strong desire for enjoyment. And why should he who has inherent tendencies of previous births, he who has already performed tapasya etc. who has the awareness that God is eternal and the world ephemeral, why should he invite these complications. Moreover tapasya is impossible in old age. (To the reader) Please read on."

The reader reads, "Shukadeva said : O father, I shall not enter the household ashrama. It leads all jivas into bondage—the relatives always press for money. Where is happiness for one who is always worried about money? The rich covetous man cannot have a good night's sleep. Where is the joy in this condition ?

M.—Thakur said : The world is a burning fire. Where is happiness here ? There are so many troubles in the household. That's why it is full of pain. Shukadeva has realized this. So he says : Life within the womb full of excreta and urine is painful. Painful too birth, old age and death. In this painful life there is but one unalloyed joy, that is the lotus-feet of the Lord. No joy elsewhere. So the happiness born of sense enjoyment has been called painful happiness—that is pain in disguise. (Laughing) Vyasadeva is shedding tears of paternal affection. Why not ? On taking up a body all this happens. Rama wept bitterly out of grief for Sita nad Lakshmana. Thakur said, 'At the death of Akshay (his nephew) my heart was wrung with grief like a towel. Such was my condition'. All this is only a temporary phase with them.

Calcutta, May 27, 1923 A.D.

13th of Jaishtha 1330 (Bengali Year)

Sunday, the 12th Day of the Bright Fortnight.

THE LAST WORD—TO LIVE IN THE  
HOUSEHOLD IN COMPLETE SURRENDER

1

The evening prayer is over. The room is hot. M is walking up and down the long verandah of the Morton first floor. He calls Jiten the Younger. Discussing something with him for sometime, he enters the room and sits down on the floor. He asks Mohan to sing a song. Mohan sings :

—Pray clean up the dirt of my mind with Thy benign hand ! May the darkness of my affections be dispelled by Thy purest ray serene ! Millions of vain desires are scoring through the deep darkness.

Who knows when this mind may be lost in the shoreless sea of poison ? Thou the Destroyer of life's adversities ! Pray stand and block this passage. Pray lead me under Thy sacred feet, wiping my mad desires.

Thou art in fire, in wind, in the eternal blue sky, in the deep forest, up on the mount, and under the water. Thou art in the creeper, inside the clouds, in the moon, stars and the sun. I am walking blindfolded in darkness, weeping.

I can see nothing, know nothing. O My God ! Give me eyes, give me understanding.

M. (To the singer)—Beautiful ! But Thakur said something besides—something more than 'Thou art in fire, in

the wind, in the eternal blue sky, in the deep forest, up on the mount, under the water. That is an avatara—He comes down in the human frame ; exactly like man ; He does everything. For example, Thakur, Krishna, Christ—मानुषो तनुमाश्रितम् । —There is something more than this. He takes up a form and talks. The indivisible Satchidananda, who is beyond word and mind takes up a form and talks to bhaktas. The Formless takes up a form. God used to talk to Thakur in a crowded room in the presence of men—not once but always. God became the avatara in one form ; He talks with him in another. If two are not there, the divine play cannot go on—that's the reason. Without His telling, this secret remains incomprehensible. The finite, the infinite, the controller from within, the twenty-four elements, the avatara—all these are the different forms of the same One.

M. (To the Doctor)—Please sing 'Gaya, Ganga'.

The Doctor sings :

—What need of Gaya, Ganga, Prabhas, Kashi, Kanchi and such other places.

If the lips can utter 'Kali, Kali, when the life ebbs out.

Thereafter M himself sings in a sweet voice :

—Cherish the revered Mother Shyama within the heart.

O My Mind, may you behold Her, may I behold Her, none else.

M. (To the bhaktas)—All these songs bring us very near—to the interior of the House. And all those songs keep the mind in the exterior.

Jiten the Elder—But are we capable of these songs ? Without that state, is it possible ?

M.—Yes, but even so, since Thakur tells us we should try.

Jiten the Younger spends the night at the Belur Math. M hears the description of the Math everyday. Today also he has done so. The talk goes on, about the stay of the bhaktas in the Math.

M. (To Jiten the Elder)—So many are spending their nights in the Math these days in the spirit of tapasya. Even so some carry mosquito-nets under their arms. Aren't we always living in comfort ? Why a net even when one goes in the spirit of tapasya ? Why ? Can't we live in the open, under a tree, resting our head on a brick ? What have we done for Him ? Oh ! the bank of the Ganga ! Just by sitting there even for two hours the life is blessed. So long as one is awake let one sit on the bank of the Ganga. Thereafter let him lie down in the open with a blanket, resting the head on a brick and covering himself with a wrapper. Even doing so far a day means so much. What trouble have we taken for Him ? The sadhus of course sleep under a net in the Math but what a hard work they put in, how much of trouble they invite for Him outside, nobody notices ! May be, for three days, they had to lie on the road without food. They come to the Math to get refreshed. This we do not see. Thakur has created centres at different places for their rest. Just as the bird, getting tired, having roamed about returns to its perch to rest there, in the same way, sadhus when tired after practising sadhan-bhajan, come here to rest for some days. Is it a comfortable rest ? What a comfort in one's house ! Somebody prepares the bed for you, for your dinner five or six varieties are cooked and arranged beautifully round a platter. Sadhus, on the other hand, go so many times without meals or eat so little. How much discomfort they put up with ! Of course, sometimes they do lie under a mosquito-net but we do not notice the other side, we only see their

sleeping under a net. They deserve to be under a net because they don't carry it with them. On the other hand, we carry it under our arms. How comfortably we live ! A little tingling in the tooth, immediately there is medicine, injection. Who looks after them when their tooth tingles, in their disease or discomfort ? Alas ! what have we done for them ? Let it be if we have discomfort and disease while calling on Him. Even so, one would have satisfaction that one has done something at least for them. One would have no regrets.

“Again there are some who go to the Math and eat their fill of the prasada. They put the ashrama (Math) to trouble. Should one eat there to one's fill ? It is the food begged by the sannyasis. How fortunate that they allow one to eat there, to let one live there. They fear the householders. Why ? Because the latter live with all vulgar comforts. That is why the sadhus feel alarmed on looking at them, on touching them.

“We have to note another thing. We should not argue with sadhus. Having their darshan and prostrating before them, this is enough of education. It is possible that somebody is a little better equipped. To display this knowledge under the cloak of discussion may hurt them. What they say in the Math should be received with homage (folding his hands) in this way—saying, ‘Yes, sir’. On being rebuked you shouldn't protest. Later on, if you meet them outside the Math, you may tell them in a friendly spirit if you have anything to say, and that too should be said most humbly, so that it does not hurt their feelings. What a great ashrama ! Why should there be any other talk ? Looking at it with a little of common-sense one understands that they have just arrived after renouncing their all. Everything is not known to them—they are trying, they have just taken the road. Remembering just this all arguments stop. It is never right to argue with them, even if one is learned and in-

telligent oneself. We should accept what they say. Those who have climbed up the roof can be talked to. They can give all the news.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Today, there came three sadhus from the Math—two of them hailed from Malabar. (Laughing) One of them was in a great confusion. So he asked : ‘The advice of Thakur is bhakti-yoga in this age. Swamiji, on the other hand indicates karma-yoga. Now which path to take ?’ I replied, ‘Have you read ‘Swamiji’s Karma-yoga ? He has also a book, Bhakti-yoga. You will understand when you read it. When he talks of karma, he emphasizes it alone. That is, he says this from the point of view of eligibility.’ I also told him that there are two kinds of karmas—egoistic and altruistic—the egoistic one for one’s own benefit, such as family life; the altruistic one for the good of others, namely running dispensaries and hospitals. One can realize Him by both ways if one acts without a selfish motive. Sri Krishna asked Arjuna to fight with an unselfish motive without expecting any fruit. Supporting the family also leads to liberation if one is able to do so unselfishly. If one cannot do so without being selfish, both result in bondage. The work of our Mission is for purifying the mind. Seeing God in man and serving Him, the mind is purified. Then comes devotion for Him. All this is altruistic work—running hospitals and dispensaries without selfish motive, all this helps in liberation. Paths are many—some of them he told Arjuna. First of all he was tempted with a kingdom, then with name and fame. When this failed, he said : You are a Kshatrya. Fight is in your nature. That you will have to do—प्रकृति त्वां नियोक्षति (Gita). Give up all fruit unto me. Act without a selfish motive. Bharata also ruled the kingdom with the same attitude. Leaving the capital, he took residence in a hut in Nandigram. Living on fruit and root he slept on the floor. Seated on a blanket, he just repeated Rama-Rama, day

and night. When Vashishtha and Sumant visited him he consulted them on state matters. Administering Rama's kingdom and meditating on Rama, he spent fourteen long years. Bharata and Arjuna are both examples of selfless workers.

## 2

M. (To the bhaktas)—Work for the wife, son and dependents becomes the cause of bondage if yoga (link) is not established with Him. Money is earned with one's life-blood and wholly spent in the service of one's kith and kin. Thereby He cannot be realized. (Pointing towards a bhakta) No service to sadhus and bhaktas, only service to one's family. And besides one's own service—one's platter decorated with different dainties and over-eating. Does it not defile the soul? Such a nature he has—killing himself by bits with too hard a labour, just to serve so many worthless persons with his money. Fie, fie on it! Why so much for them? What are they? What is their value? They have neither merit nor devotion to God. Why then so much shedding of blood for them? Son, daughter, son-in-law, what use feeding them? This will not lead to God-realization. Service if rendered to the gods, to sadhus and bhaktas, to God in the poor will bring mukti. And mere service to the family will bring on bondage. Thinking over this alone one can stand apart from them. If one passes away today, what will happen? Will they not survive? Then why worry so much? Whom do they love? Money, not he who is earning and feeding them with so much labour. Recently, a son hit the father in the chest in Barahanagar and the father died. A trifling matter had started the quarrel. This is affection! Doctor Akshay died. The sons observed a little mourning for some days. Then they took to their routine. Along with the shraddha, they resumed feasting, roaming about, driving the car and all that. This is the affection of the children for the father.

What about that for which the man was born ? To that one gives no thought. Why waste life with so much unnecessary labour ? There is still time. One should engage it in the service of God. There is still time. One should rise and take to it at once.

“He went to the house of Hriday Mukherji at Sior. The relatives had been invited there. No sooner did he see them than Thakur left. He said, ‘Why feed them ? Where they sit the spot gets polluted to a depth of seven cubits’. Why squander so much on those who lead a beastly life ? Sometimes Thakur would say weeping to the Mother of the Universe : Ma, I can’t bear it any longer. People are immersed in woman and gold and to add to it they are engaged only in service to their kith and kin. How shall I raise them ? The dependents have a demand viz. food and clothing. If provision is made for their coarse rice and cloth it is enough. This provision should be made so long as the body-consciousness is there, so long as one feels hunger and thirst, has sense of decency. One should provide for a minor son and an unmarried daughter. If the parents are alive one has to serve them till they live. Slip out as soon as provision of simple food has been made for the children. Why engage in it throughout the life ? Make provision and come out into solitude. Get news at times. To make provision of rice and dal—of coarse rice and cloth—not of luxury, not of all kinds of eatables, not of a cart-load of clothes. That is how Thakur taught one to do. And serve gods, sadhus, bhaktas and the God in the poor with rest of the money. This will do good to the soul, will bring in mukti.

M. (To a bhakta)—Just see, what are we after ? What may help animal life to grow is our constant effort. Eating, sleeping, procreating and dying—this is what is life. What do we do for God ? This is what we do

ourselves and also teach the members of our household. Marry away sons and daughters—the family should grow, this is our only concern. But the Veda says : न इह चेत् अवेदित् महति विनष्टि । —Not to realize God in this very body is the greatest ruination. What have we done for it ? That is why Thakur would ask us to retire into solitude every now and then. Perhaps one may remember this in solitude—what is the ideal of life and what am I doing. If the members of the family lead an animal life it is very easy to part with them. With bhaktas however, it is rather difficult to do so. Bhaktas cannot be forsaken, you see. By living together, there is also the danger of attachment. What are we all living with ? Sometimes he sat thinking and would say, “What shall I do, Mother ? Who listens to me ? I see that everybody is the buyer of the *Kalai dal*,” that is of woman and gold. On the visit of the parents-in-law of the sons and daughters or of the son-in-law what nice arrangements are made to feast them, as if it was a day of festivities ! But when the guru, a sadhu or a bhakta turns up just rice and dal for him. Attachment to one’s kith and kin takes the mind down. The love of sadhus and bhaktas leads to God realization. He who serves receives the powers of the person served.

M. (To the bhaktas, laughing)—A guru had a certain tailor as his disciple. The wife of the guru needed a shirt. The disciple said, “I shall stitch it for you, Mother. Let the cuttings accumulate.” The cuttings were never accumulated, so the shirt was never stitched. A certain person was fishing—all fishes weighing two to four seers. The guru wanted one. He replied, “Just wait. All these are big ones. Let me hook a smaller one and I shall present it to you.” (Everybody laughs). Yes, for giving to the guru only cloth saved from customers or a small fish. If sandesh (A Bengal sweet) has to be offered to God or to a deity it would be no better than a lump of

sugar. If one were to hit the head with it, the head would begin to bleed. But if sandesh has to be brought for the dear son-in-law, it must be from the Bow Bazar—sandesh worth eight rupees a seer. For the temple, *payas* (milk-rice) would be prepared with three seers of milk diluted with ten seers of water, but to serve the son-in-law *payas* prepared from ten seers boiled till it is reduced to two. This is the picture of the world. It is with such things that we are passing days and nights.

M. (To himself)—Who is a friend ? Who is a relative ? He who helps on the path of God; who helps to attain the Eternal Life is a real friend. (To the bhaktas) ‘Uncle, look after yourself,’ (Laughing)—a beautiful phrase I heard in the train from an old man. I was coming from Mihijam. The railway officials arranged for sleeping accommodation for me by making others get up. The train had started. I called them back and made them sit beside me. One of them would not sit down. “No sir. You sit down.” I said, “No. You please sit down. What does it matter if we pass the night sitting ? Besides it is such a pleasant night.” In the meanwhile, I saw that all the passengers were in my favour. On old man was sitting close by, with his leg bandaged, probably it was a wound or something. He had pulled up his leg; it appeared that he was uncomfortable. Seeing it I said, “Why are you sitting so uncomfortably ? Please stretch your legs.” The old man said, “Uncle, look after yourself.” (Everybody laughs loudly) Why should one defile one’s mind, labouring only for them all the time ?

## 3

M. (To a youngman)—Shukadeva said : A dependent has no joy. And he who is dependent on his wife has no joy whatever— सुखं किं परतन्त्रस्य स्त्रीजितस्य विशेषतः— It is the woman who constitutes the worldly life. Besides, four or five of them cannot pull on well together—the

result : fights and quarrels, anger and pique. When angry, she would box her son on the back. Her vanity wounded, at once her eyes would begin to water and nose to run. With all this one lives in the household—with wife, son, daughter. Falling on evil days, during testing times one realizes that none is a real friend. Everybody is busy with himself—struggle for existence—"Uncle, look after yourself."

M. (To the bhaktas)—The avatara comes to raise man from this piteous condition—to reduce his misdeeds. He shows the path by which one gains the Life Eternal. Those who listen are saved; those who don't are damned. The relatives did not listen to Sri Krishna. That is why warring with one another they destroyed themselves in Prabhasa. He (Sri Krishna) knew their end. So he was already prepared for it. The young men had started insulting the rishis, the jnanis. Immediately thereafter started mutual bickerings. Mutual strife led to the destruction of the clan of Yadu. Sri Krishna stood there with his hands under his armpit as a witness. Prakriti must assert itself. He was not pained for he was ready for the worst; he knew the end before hand.

M. (To Shukalal)—Thakur used to say : Having money, one may become half-liberated in this life if one knows its proper use. Having made provision of rice and dal for the members of the family, one should come out. One should use the rest of the money in the service of the sadhu, the bhakta and the deity. Balaram Babu used to do so. Ah! what a family of bhaktas! The daughters on going to their fathers-in-law's houses after their marriage transformed all people there into bhaktas. Such is the influence of education. They would take their bath, offer their prayers, put sandal-wood paste on their foreheads, perform japa and then take water. The old mother-in-law would think, the daughter-in-law though young is

telling her beads, What am I doing myself. Imitating her, she would also take to japa—such was the family education. What the head of the family does is learnt by the children. That's why the heads of family have to be very careful.

"There is nothing whatsoever certain about this body—now it is, now no more. Whatever the money one possesses, one should try to live on its interest—just this to be done. If one tries to do more where is the leisure? Raise your standard of living and you are in trouble. They say that in the West some one perhaps raised his standard, gave his daughter in marriage to the son of a lord. Now he had to fall in step with the lord. Besides, he fell into debt. What should he do now? One day, he shuts himself behind a closed door and pop! He had committed suicide. This is the only solution to this problem. Hence 'Uncle, look after yourself.'

"What different impressions the bhaktas carried in their minds by M's long expert surgical operations who can tell? Externally all were so quiet, so motionless. Will the bhaktas be able to translate into action even a fraction of these nectar-like teachings? How terrible, irresistible the human nature! Only he who is helpful on the path of God is a real friend, hearing this nectar-like word of the great rishi shall we be able to free ourselves from the bondage of the family?"

For a long time not a word dropped from anybody's lips. At last, Jiten the Elder, mature in jnana and the foremost among the bhaktas taking courage began to describe the painful state of the mind of the bhaktas.

Jiten the Elder (With utmost humility)—Sir, if one is not able to act fully according to these great maxims of Thakur what is the remedy?

M. (impassively)—Surrender yourself unto Him and He

will take up the burden ; He himself will get it done. He is the first-class physician.

Jiten the Elder (disappointedly)—Whatever you may say sir, without the help of a higher power, we can perform neither tapasya nor sadhana.

M.—Yes, it is the Higher Power that has said that one should practise sadhana and tapasya. At least one should make an effort, prepare for it. He said : Nivritti (Disinclination to worldly life) is better than pravritti (Inclination), failure is better than success. In success the man forgets Him. In failure, one is conscious of Him. 'Pravritti and Nivritti are co-wives. Take Nivritti with yourself.'

"The main thing is to take refuge in Him. And try to do what He has said about it. The rest is for Him. He takes care of everybody—the yogi, the bhogi and the yogi-cum-bhogi. The whole burden to be on Him. But if you wish for peace and happiness in this life you have to try to meditate on Him, you have to take refuge in Him."

Calcutta, the 28th of May, 1923 A.D.

14th of Jaishtha, 1330 (Bengali year)

Monday, the 13th Day of the Bright Fortnight.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### HE SPEAKS THROUGH THIS MOUTH

#### 1

Morton School. It is about 7 p.m. M, seated in the eastern end of the verandah of the first floor is conversing with Dr. Bakshi. After some time Jagabandhu is called in. In the meanwhile Yogen has also come. Yogen is about fifty. He has only a son in this world. He is not peaceful at heart. Some time ago, he had been appointed the treasurer in the Dakshineswar Temple through M's efforts. Having saluted, Yogen talks of his personal troubles.

Yogen (To M)—Sir, kindly do me a favour. Find a way for me.

M.—Did you visit Annada Thakur to-day ? What holy matters were talked there ? Was there any hymn or song ?

Yogen—I went; nothing such there. The mind is so restless. Please find a way. You are almost an avatara.

M. (In a sharp contradictory voice)—Lucky that you have said so ! Blessed I am indeed ! Thakur did not accept even the word of Keshab Sen, what of yours ? Could somebody like Narada, Shukadeva say so there might have been something in it.

Yogen (embarrassed)—Except God you talk of nothing else. Elsewhere one talks of other things too. I have been impertinent. Please excuse me.

M. (feelingly)—By talking about God I do good to myself. The Gita says : 'कथयन्त परस्परम्'. By talking about Him to bhaktas one's own mind is purified. It is all for my good—to talk about Him and listen about Him. So I ask you to please remember the first lines of what is said at Annada Thakur's and the songs sung there. Hearing about God brings a coolness to the heart. 'Uncle, look after yourself.' (Laughs)—These talks about the Math, about sadhus that we hear everyday do such a lot of good to us.

M. enters the room and sits down. After a while he goes again to the verandah with Shukalal and begins to converse with him. Even if it is an ordinary matter he talks of it to the man concerned in private. Nobody knows the problems of others. He comes back to the room again and sits down.

Jiten the Elder (prayerfully)—A song says : 'Just like the cow behind its calf.' Just as the cow keeps a strict vigilance over its calf similarly if a spiritually advanced soul keeps a watch constantly on some one there would be no cause for fear.

M. (absent-mindedly)—Ah! How the calf bleats, humba, humba! The Veda speaks of the calf.

While saying these words M's mood changes. Both of his bright eyes get fixed as if on some distant land. His face is serenely calm and profound. After some time he begins to speak in a low voice : "Just as the cow runs after the calf, similarly if somebody roams about madly after Him, he gets His darshana. (To himself) तपः ब्रह्म —Tapas is Brahman—(To the bhaktas) Sadhana is necessary. Nothing without it. By forsaking everything did rishis attain Him— त्यागेनैकः अमृतत्वमानसु—By renunciation alone one attains the Life Eternal.

Jiten the Elder asked for grace. M replied: Renunciation and tapasya are needed. Even to obtain grace, is there need of renunciation and tapasya ? M kept silent again for a long time. Again he resumed.

M. (To Kartik)—Doctor Babu, What did Gyana Maharaj say to you in the Math ?

Doctor.—He talked about the Kathamrita Festival—the day of the first publication of the Kathamrita celebrated every year. And he said : What Swamiji (Vivekananda) said about the Kathamrita, such high praise he gave to no other book. It is through the Kathamrita that we first come to know about Thakur. He (M) is alive. It will be nice if it (the festival) gets a start now.

M.—Yes. Mohendra Goswami used to celebrate the Bhagavata Festival in the house of Yadu Mullick. Thakur used to go to that festival. Mohendra Goswami had said to us : 'The Bhagavata is the same as Bhagavan, God Himself—That's why its festival'. All words of Thakur are Veda mantras. He himself said: Bhakta, Bhagavata, Bhagavan—one. The Bhagavata is the word of Bhagavan. The Kathamrita is His word so it is the Bhagavata. This reminds me of another incident. Thakur is seated on the smaller cot. Calling me to his side he says : 'See, He talks through this mouth.' No other talk but this one! Parenthetically he said so. Ah! His words are Veda Mantras. Though not in Sanskrit yet they are mantras. 'Brahman, Maya, Jiva, Jagat,' this is one mantra. Repeating it one becomes perfect, that is one sees God. '*Tanke dakbe mone bove kone*'—Call upon Him in the mind, in the forest, in the corner—this again is a mantra. '*Ekti thak ache, Ishwar boi kichhu jane na—jeman moumachhi phule boi bosbe na*'—There is a class which knows nothing but God, as for example, the bee which sits on nothing else but a flower. This is yet another. '*Tini antare bahire abar taro atit*'—He is inside, outside, and

beyond all this. This too is one. This is the essence of the Gayatri. If I were to repeat, 'He is inside, outside and beyond all this', shall I fail ?

M. (To the bhaktas)—How much has he spoken to awaken us but who cares to listen ? It is good to think about death but it is not good to fear it. Death itself he has explained in so many ways but do we retain anything ? He used to see it before his eyes, you see. He used to say : 'Everything bears the impress of death.' He related the story of 'The Devotee Stork', one day. The stork is standing in the water. His eyes are fixed to the fish. The fish moving, he also moves, and the hunter on the bank also moves. No sooner does the stork pounce on the fish than it is pierced by the arrow of the hunter from behind and dies. This is the state of the jiva. Why did he tell all this—so that, may be, one gets awakening, for death stands before us. Do people listen by mere saying. They are immersed in the world with all this—with the stomach and nothing but the stomach. Also, producing children and bringing them up. They, the animals are also engaged in the same. Throughout the day, they are busy eating like this (lowering his head) eating and eating and in between physical pleasures. Ah! How easy has it been made for the householder! If told of complete renunciation, they would be scared away. That's why he talked of living in solitude. Just a stay of three, seven or ten days does it. This is like administering quinine within a plantain. Since it is bitter the child refuses it; the mother conceals it within a plantain. So easy has he made the path—even so does man take to it ? Work and work! The whole day one labours to the breaking point. Where is the leisure to call upon Him ? Did he not say so many times : 'Finish it off quickly. Make provision for food and clothing and come out.' But who listens ?

## 2

M. (To the young-man)—Samadhi is the normal state of man, but now it has become abnormal. Why?—Because of the desire for enjoyment. The desire for enjoyment gone, it is samadhi. During community celebrations it is demonstrated beautifully. Brahma, Vishnu and other dieties are all seated in meditation. It means that the normal state of man is samadhi. Fallen into the world, it has become abnormal. For example, say one was asleep, that is one was in samadhi. Somebody puts the snuff to the nose. Now one begins to sneeze and sneeze. The sleep is gone. The same exactly is the case with the jiva. Samadhi, in other words, God—forgetting Him one is inebriated with sense enjoyments. All men are fully drowned in worldliness. Thakur had said, 'I saw only one man with raised eyes at the turning of the criminal courts. All others had downward eyes.' He used to come to Calcutta by a hired carriage. Looking out of the windows, he would see people on the road. Downward looking means looking at the stomach only, eating, sleeping and procreating, and bringing up children—with these alone they are busy.

M. (To the bhaktas)—It is heard that in the past as soon as the son was seven, he was sent to the house of the guru after the Upanayan. The Upanayan (the sacred thread ceremony) means Brahman-mantra. That was given to him. 'Now go there and take to sadhana and thereby awaken Him.' The boys had no discretion—so the whole responsibility was on the guru. The guru having studied the nature (of his disciples) made separate arrangements for them. Some were sent on pilgrimage, some were kept with himself, and some were sent home. This was a nice system. Now, all this has disappeared. In the olden times, fathers were real friends. The function of a real friend is to show the way to the Eternal Life. Feeding

and clothing only are not the function of a real friend. Thakur said that within this body there are two more bodies—the subtle and the causal. All the three bodies should be given food. Arranging only for cereal food, is it affection ? This is only for the animal body, this gross body. The food of the subtle body is the cultivation of learning—craft, science, literature, history, study of these different learnings. This stimulates judgement and reasoning, and the food of the subtle body is meditation, repetition of His name, discrimination, dispassion, knowledge, devotion and love—all these. It is through this causal body that man attains divinity. He is the real friend who arranges the food of this causal body.

M. (To a householder devotee)—Just to feed the stomach is not called affection. Is it for this, this hard labour and earning of wealth ? My God ! Is it love ? As soon as the body is somewhat grown up, arrange for his marriage, provide him with that which you indulge in. Nothing about God, nothing about serving sadhu-bhaktas, only the worship of the stomach with the earned money. Affection indeed ! For shame ! (Excitedly) To hell with this affection.

“The son of Mani Mullick died. At first what a grief Thakur showed, how much he did to console him ! O my God ! Ultimately says he : O Jiva, prepare thyself for the battle, for death has entered your house in battle array. You are a fool. You are sorrowing, you have forgotten death, death has already entered within you. Get ready to overcome death. Take refuge in that Victor of Death—of whom Yama, the god of death is afraid.”

M. (To the bhaktas)—Seeing all these strange happenings Thakur would smile. There is nothing anywhere, seated alone he is smiling—seeing individual cases, he would smile. Again when he would see the affairs of the world in a collective way, he would clap both of his

hands and dance, seeing the work of Mahamaya. He did so much, he taught so much, yet people would not wake up. "Doing it even for three days will do," said he. But how can one do, where are the sanskaras ? According to one version, from his very birth Shukadeva had gone to perform tapasya. All this happens when one has sanskaras. One should have accumulated something in the past life, then alone it becomes possible, otherwise the mind does not go that way at all. How ignorant we are ! Even those who are called mlechhas are looking up to Bharata. They say: 'Only Bharata has solved the problem of life.' But we do not wake up. Plain living and high thinking—this is the truth of ancient India discovered by the rishis but we have forgotten it.

## 3

Jiten the Elder—But where is that strength in us to practise tapasya ? It is neither in body nor in mind.

M.—What are you saying ? That strength will grow with tapasya. Tapasya means just an effort to recognize one's own self. The more the mind is drawn towards it the more the increase in strength. What ! Are we not the children of God, or God Himself ?—the more this pride grows, the more the strength becomes invincible. What a great strength Hanuman had ! By taking to tapasya the infinite power of God helps. One identifies with that power. That is why those who have a feeble mind should take to tapasya. Then only the strength will increase. It is He who gives strength. Thakur has taught us to take to tapasya. When we try to abide by his word he himself gives the strength—physical as well as mental, both. When the mind is strong the body follows it. (Excitedly) But do people act in that way ? Let one act and see. Just act upon one or two of these great words. He has said : "The company of the sadhus is always necessary," and "One should not look at women in the

state of an aspirant,"—let one act upon just these two. One can become a perfected soul if one acts upon them. That none does. I shall do nothing at all; and the power should come in a jiffy!..The guru initiates and then says, "Awaken it by sadhana and tapasya". Just by crying for strength can one get it? One must act, make effort. Acting upon what Thakur taught having come down as an avatara, power must come. So one must believe in sanskaras. Having these, one attains in no time. A child of five plays an instrument or sings a song with such absorption. Why?—He has the sanskaras; he has done it previously, that's it.

M. (To Antevasi)—Will you repeat orally what was read yesterday about Shukadeva's dispassion?

Antevasi—Shukadeva has developed a distaste for the world; Vyasadeva the father is shedding tears in sorrow. Says he, "Son, please marry and live as a householder. Then follow dharma in old age." Shukadeva replies, "Where is the joy for a dependent? Especially for him who is subordinate to his wife there is no joy whatsoever. The relations and kinsmen always scold him for money. So he cannot have a good sleep at night. Life in mother's womb, birth, old age, death—all these are full of pain. That which will end all these pains shall I try."—Saying so he embraced sannyasa.

M.—That is to say, he abandoned home for taking to tapasya. I say, one must take to tapasya. Without tapasya nothing is attained. During his tapasya a voice from the void said, "I alone exist becoming all." Had it not been so why should the great have taken to tapasya? That is why it is equated to Brahman in the Veda : तपः ब्रह्म ।

Jiten the Elder (humbly)—But the mind does not budge a jot from this side. What to do? Without grace nothing avails.

M.—Everything becomes possible by praying to Him. Putting faith in his word, one should make a little effort. What an ideal ! How many times did he repeat : Meditate upon me and that will do. Nothing else will be needed. Seated in a solitary corner one should try to meditate for a few days just on this. What an easy path ! No complications. Having arranged for bread one should meditate upon him. Two bhaktas used to visit Thakur. He made one of them perform a little japa-tapa for some days. But the bhakta stopped going to him. Thakur asked the other why so and so was not coming. Somebody replied, "But he has no time now to come here." Hearing it Thakur said, "Yes, he cannot go beyond it in this birth. He cannot achieve anything further." One can attain Him only after the tapasya of many lives. One day, Vivekananda and others were seated there. Thakur said, "Well, one has climbed up the roof. He sees somebody else trying to do the same. Say, can the former help him to climb up?" In other words: 'I have climbed up the roof. Listen to what I say.' Revealing himself in so many ways he said so. Even then people fail to wake up. How can they since they all are downward looking fellows ? Were I to go to the fields of Mihi-jam and preach to the cattle, God is real and the world transitory, would they listen ? Strange is the play of Mahamaya, wonderful her actions ! Seeing this Thakur would dance and clap. They perform 'the wonderful action' on the stage. The Chinese, the English, the Japanese, the German, peoples of different lands keep on speaking different languages. The result : a great confusion of voices—nobody understanding anybody, nobody listening to anybody. Similar is this world.

Dr. Bakshi:—Thakur used to say, 'Meditation on me alone will do.' What to meditate ? Meditate on his lotus feet or anything else ?

M.—Yes, one day let it be on his lotus feet, another day the story of his divine play, a third day his teachings. All this is his meditation. Just by meditating on these, the biggest problems of life and soul get solved themselves gradually. There is yet another. There is no thought there. Thinking about him the mind loses itself. When there is no mind who will think then ? The song says : 'The black bee of my mind is immersed in the black lotus of the feet of the Mother Shyama. Both the feet and the bee are black. The black is lost in the black. The five elements, intoxicated as they always are retreat having seen this interesting spectacle.' The black bee, that is mind, seated at the lotus feet of the Mother is drinking deep the honey. The five elements, that is nescience or ignorance retreat having seen this. What else to do ? It is not permitted to go there—it is beyond its jurisdiction. This is the state of samadhi. The mind loses itself on seeing God. Is it possible to raise the mind by beating with a stick ? No, that's not possible—this is its natural flight. Think of a barge. Fifty poles are pulling at it but it does not move. Why?—It is anchored. The mind is also anchored to wordly thoughts. How can it rise ?

Jiten the Elder (To himself)—Once the mind gets immersed there, the wordly enjoyments do not attract any more.

M. (scolding)—Why to think so much of wordly enjoyments and such other things? What Thakur taught is the only right course of action for us. He said: Meditate on me. Attempt that alone. Why engage the mind in other matters ? By meditating on him lust etc. would dry up like water on the ground. So long as there is a mind there will be one worry or the other. People say don't worry. Is it possible ? So long there is mind worry there must be. That's why we should think on him and of nothing else

Dr. Bakshi —That (samadhi) is achieved through the grace of the guru. The guru said : "There's a rope with a thousand knots. The juggler unties them just by a shake of his hand."

M.—True, it's only by the grace of the guru. But one should try to do what the guru says. There has to be a channel for the manifestation of His grace. Just by shouting 'grace' grace', grace will not descend. That's why Christ said : "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (St. Luke 6:46) How much of tapasya Thakur underwent ! He asked us only to do a fraction. We must do that. मंत्रमूलम् गुरोर्वक्तव्यम् ।  
—The word of the guru is the basic mantra.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Does the mind easily go there ? A certain bhakta, having relinquished all, came to live with Thakur. Another bhakta said to Thakur : "You talk of his very high spiritual status but he is thinking of his wife." Hearing it, Thakur said : Why, why shouldn't he ? He has taken up a body. He who has knowledge has also ignorance. In the state of a vijnani the struggle between the opposites ceases. This is a stage. Such men do not have to do much themselves. It is He who does for them. Thakur did this (imitating japa) for one of the bhaktas. Later, he said, "Very high spiritual status. Just see, he made me perform the japa." He knows that he will not do it himself. That's why he does it himself. This is a separate class. A song says : 'O Mother Deliverer, we are indebted to Thee. We are indebted to God. In other words, our normal state is to keep our mind at His lotus feet—it is samadhi. Engrossed in worldliness, the jiva has forgotten it, therefore indebted. There we will have to go, all of us. How various the ways in which Thakur is bestowing fearlessness on us. Jesus also said after granting fearlessness, on seeing the bhaktas in despair, 'In the world ye shall have tribula-

tion : but be of good cheer ; I have overcome the world.' (St. John 16:33) 'Who thou art and who I am, knowing just this would do. You will have to do nothing more'—This is the message of hope of Thakur.

M. (To a certain bhakta)—Such an insight Thakur had ! Just by casting a glance once he would know the entire inside of a man—whatever one had within, just as one can see everything inside a glass case.

"Peace dawns just by hearing about Him. If sanskaras are missing all this becomes unpalatable. If one has done (good actions) in the previous birth it blazes forth suddenly in a twinkle. A peacock was given some opium at 4 o'clock. Now it comes daily inebriated by the same. If there are sanskaras one longs for a talk on Him as for a drug. A bhakta came here. As he listened to these things he started weeping. While talking of the Math, he said, "If this is not heaven where else shall I find one ?" His bhoga is over. It is getting bright. Therefore such talks and tears. The sun-rise follows the dawn !

Calcutta, 29th May 1923 A.D.

15th of Jaishtha 1330 (Bengali year)

Tuesday, the Full Moon Day.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE MEANS : COMPANY AND SERVICE OF SADHUS AND PRAYER

#### 1

M is seated in the room on the first floor. It is seven in the evening. Bhaktas surround him : Shukalal, Doctor, Vinay, and Jagabandhu. In the meanwhile, enter Jiten the Elder, Virinchi, Jiten the Younger and Sukhendu. Within a few moments, Rakhal, Yogen, Manoranjana, Nalini the Younger and others also reach. The two brothers of Doctor Indu Madhava Mullik of Bhavanipur also come. One of them is the father-in-law of M's son, Prabhash Babu. After the initial greetings and welcome, M talks with him about God.

M. (To Mullik Mahashay)—Parmahansadeva used to say : If by listening and meditating upon the name of God, the hair of a person stand on end and he begins to shed tears of love one should infer that he is about to shed off his karmas. In other words, he has already attained nearness to God. Just as after the dawn there is not much delay in the sunrise, similarly at the appearance of these sattvic signs in the body, at the mention of God's name one should know that He is soon going to reveal Himself. The rishis said during the Yajna of Bali, in Dwarpar age: Well, why does the hair stand on end on the body in this way ? Does it mean the coming of the Yajnaeshwara (Master of the Yajna) Himself ? Coming of the Yajnaeshwara means close contact with God, we should so understand it. God was present at

the place of the yajna in the form of Vamana. But this was not known to all. The rishis could guess from the physical changes on their bodies that God was very near.

“The scriptures sanction initiation from the mother who has given birth. You are very fortunate. You have received all these instructions from your mother. Now have faith and take to work.”

Mullik Mahashay—What can not be achieved by faith? I have heard that in Manikarnika of Kashi, Mother Annapurna in the guise of a prostitute, requested everybody for help for cremating her dead son. There was but one condition: Only he who is sinless will touch the dead body. And lo! nobody came forward. A drunkard used to come daily for a bath in the Ganga. This day also he had taken his bath. Seeing the dead body, he came forward to perform the funeral rites. The goddess said: “You are a drunkard. Your breathing emits foul smell of the wine. Don’t touch the body.” He replied: “What are you saying, Mother? I have just had a dip in the Ganga. All my sins have been washed away. I am purified.”

M.—Thakur also used to tell a story. There was a bhakta called Krishna Kishore in Dakshineshwar—full of faith, belonging to a high Brahmin family. He went to Vrindaban. One day he felt very thirsty. People were drawing water out of a deep well. He asked for water. One of them said, “Pundit ji, how can we give you water, we the cobblers?” Krishan Kishore said, “So, do one thing. Say: Shiva, Shiva.” The fellow repeating the name of Shiva, gave water and the other drank. Such a faith! If one has faith, know that much has been achieved.

“And there is another. A sadhu has come to the ghat of Endedaha. Everybody goes to pay him a visit. Haladhari, an elder cousin of Thakur, used to practise

the path of knowledge. Says he, "A cage of bones and flesh ! What do you go to see, you people ?" Thakur told this to Krishna Kishore who felt very angry on hearing it. He said, "What ! The body by which God is worshipped, the body of him who has renounced his all for the sake of God, you call that body a cage of bones and flesh. The body of a bhakta is the symbol of divinity." What an anger ! He stopped talking to Haladhari. He would come to the Kali Bari to pluck flowers but he would not even turn to Haladhari to look at him. Such a faith, such a belief !

'I a sinner,' 'I a mean fellow'—this sentiment of the Vaishnavas Thakur did not like. He used to say : If they say so what is the sanctity of the Divine Name ? A little fire on a big heap of cotton burns it out completely. The same with the Name. Repeat the Name but once, all sins are destroyed. To Vijay Krishan Goswami also he said the same, one day, in the Brahma Samaj : 'Why do you people say so much, I am a sinner, I am a sinner. Rather say, I have uttered His Name. How can I have sin then ?'

Mullick Mahashay—The prayer that is read in the Christian Church does not, however, mention anything like sin.

M.—Our Father which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as  
it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from  
evil : For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the  
glory, for ever.

(St. Matthew 6: 9 to 13)

Yes, it does not mention that. Paramahansadeva also taught us a Lord's prayer :

'I don't wish for body-comfort, Ma.

I don't wish for name and fame, Ma.

I don't wish for the eight siddhis\*, Ma.

I do not wish for a hundred siddhis Ma.

Give me pure devotion at your lotus feet.

And do this much that I may not be charmed by your world-bewitching Maya.'

Worldly fame—a little of which makes one's mouth water ; the eight occult powers—wading the river on foot, curing diseases and so on. Sri Krishna said to Arjuna : 'With these you can rise high in the world but you will not realize God.' Arjuna therefore, did not accept occult powers. Thakur said something else too :

'Ma, I am the instrument, You are the engineer.

I am the dwelling, You are the dweller.

I am the body, You are the occupier.

I am the chariot, You are its charioteer.

As you make me move so I move.

As you make me speak so I speak.

As you make me do, so I do.

Ma! My refuge! My refuge ! My refuge !'

Mullick Mahashay—Well, is it possible without His Grace ?

M.—Does grace come by itself ? There has to be a channel—dhyana, japa, tapasya. Grace dawns even by repeating His Name. Christian devotees repeat : Pater Noster, Maria, these holy names in the rosary.

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\*Occult powers

Mullick Mahashay:—Well, if all the people were to pray in this way, how will the world go on ?

M.—No, why so ? It is not for everybody. In the school, there are first, second, third, so many different classes. Does everybody study in the first class ? Those who want God are a class apart. Thakur used to say : Men are of three classes—the yogi who is like the bee. It would not sit except on a flower. For example, Narada, Shukadeva. Second, yogi cum bhogi—this also is a class as that of the Pandavas. On the one hand they marry the daughters of Devas and Nagas, on the other God accompanies them always. And the last—those who are in bhoga alone.

Mullick Mahashay.—Everybody will have to go to the First Class, one day.

M.—Yes, the Gita says : अनेक जन्म संसिद्धस्ततो याति परांगतिम् ।  
—It may not happen in one birth alone. Why, should one therefore give up spiritual practices ? Like a true farmer he will go on trying whether he succeeds or not.

Mullick Mahashay bade good-bye.

## 2

Yogen tells Doctor about his personal problems in a soft voice. Doctor advises him to bring it to the knowledge of M.

Yogen (Humbly to M)—Sir, do me a little favour. Even now, my mind becomes restless on seeing women. Outwardly, I may be shedding tears but the inside is dry. I have no tears for Thakur. Through your kindness, the problem of board and lodging at Dakshineswar is solved. A little more of your kindness will take me through.

M. (Laughing loudly after a momentary silence)—That's why Thakur used to say: 'The disease is there, always.'

If that is so we shall have to take his prescription. He said : Always keep the company of the holy. That's what we should do. And we should sit with those who weep sincerely (for God). Then one would also feel like weeping. What have we done sincerely for Him ? Nothing anywhere. Could one succeed just like that ? One may read a thousand books, pass the law, all this in vain. If you wish to be a good lawyer you have to be articulated to a top class lawyer. You will have to serve this lawyer. Thakur used to say : Just as by looking at a lawyer one is reminded of a judge and his court, similarly by looking at a sadhu one is reminded of God. Keeping the company of the holy, serving them, living in solitude—all these should be practised. You have done nothing, you have been nowhere near it. Will it happen in a trice ? No, that's not possible." M began to narrate how he served sadhus in the Panchavati.

"One day, a number of sadhus arrived. I was asked to arrange for flour, clarified butter and so on. And he said : "It is good to serve sadhus. What do you say?" Then he began to recount a tale. "A sadhu was taking his bath. His loin-cloth was swept away by the current. Droupadi noticed it and tearing half a piece of her own cloth gave it to the sadhu. In the court of the Kauravas, when Droupadi was being stripped of her clothes, she wept and wept and prayed : Lord ! save my modesty. Bhagavan appeared and asked her : 'Did you ever give away any cloth to a sadhu ?' Droupadi then narrated the above incident. Consoling her, Bhagavan said : "No fear then." The more her cloth was pulled the longer it became—His Maya.

"After narrating this story, he said : Do say what I told you. Thus, he impressed its import at once on my mind. And he made me repeat it.

"When flour and clarified butter had been fetched the sadhus themselves cooked their meals. They ate, so

did Thakur in their company. A little was kept for me too."

M. (To Yogen)—This is the disease. We do everything but while giving something to a sadhu all calculations come in. After weighing it fully a little is spared. For the sake of their wives, sons, sons-in-law, men spend with both hands. Whatever the expense, there is no 'no'. This time I had a talk with a Brahmin cook. An old individual, he had served in several big homes. He told a story about an England-returned fellow. His sons and daughters had each a car. Each one had half a dozen servants and maids. And their meals were cooked in different kitchens. In one, Bengali meals, in another *pulao* and *kalia* and in a third, English style meals. Besides, there was preserved meat—a slice of it would be served to each. The ladies too are taking the same. As for marketing, all purchases are being made to one's fancy. Piles of clothes, each one is purchasing to his own choice. In this way, thousands of rupees are being spent. But not a mention of service to God, service to sadhus. I come to know that when in mourning they would roll on the ground and beat and shriek just like our women. Then there is no aristocratic style. I have heard of so many 'M'ams'. They also roll on the ground in extreme grief. This is what Thakur called the world of avidya. No service to sadhus, bhaktas or the poor, only service to one's own kith and kin. Fie! it will not do to call this love or affection. The love that leads to the path of God, I call that only true love. What is this? Earning money by the sweat of one's brow and spending it all on eating! What kind of living is this? Animals do the same. What is the difference?

## 3

M. (To the bhaktas)—In the home of the bhakta, there is daily talk of God. If the head of the family

cannot do it himself he engages a pundit to recite scriptures—the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Bhagavata, the Padma Purana, the Brahmavaivart Purana—all these. Always His name. Festivals, such as the Durga Puja, should be celebrated if one can afford. And service of the sadhus and the poor—the head of the family should try to do all these. The responsibility of the members of the family becoming a different sort rests on its head. He himself had given the latitude. Now he himself has to make an effort to uplift them. If even after the effort one fails to turn the household Godwards, one should stand aside at a distance. What else to do ? Should one stick like a leech to them throughout the life ? Why ? No obligation whatsoever. The clan of the Yadus is going to destruction and Sri Krishna stands unmoved like a statue. Who can check human nature ? Irresistible !

M. (To Shukalal)—A fellow asked Thakur in Seenti : How long should one look after one's children ? He replied, "Till they are fit to earn, and girls, till they are married. Thereafter, let them work and eat." Thakur was beyond the three gunas. Grieved at the sorrows of the jiva, he was always thinking of their welfare, always thinking how they can get leisure and call upon Him. These are his dicta, not ours. What do we know, what can we say ? Just make an effort. If you cannot make a vidya-sansara (spiritually based family), there is nothing else you can do. Making provision for the family, you should stand apart at a distance. Then meditate on God.

M. (To a bhakta)—By serving sadhus lust is automatically suppressed. And how easy Thakur has made it ! There you have all renouncing sadhus and the steamer to reach them. His sadhus live there in the Belur Math. Where else will you find such as these ? He has not

only taught to seek the company of sadhus, he has created them too, excellent sadhus all. One must daily keep the company of the holy. But beware ! Let there be no trouble to the Ashrama. One should go there only with the idea to carry out tapasya—to serve and not to be served. Even when scolded, not a word to be uttered. One should stand with folded hands. What a great ashrama it is ! isn't it the sannyasa ashrama ? Being oneself in the department of bhoga, one has to be patient with it.

Shukalal—Should not one complain even when scolded ? Doesn't one feel hurt ?

M.—Let it be. You will have to put up with it. We have given ourselves up to bhoga. This is the reason. Can we afford to judge ? He for whom they have renounced everything will do it. What a great ashrama ! Chaitanya Deva, seeing the ochre clothes on the back of a donkey, lay prostrate before it. And here, you have all the sadhus in flesh and blood. What facilities the Math has provided ! Daily, I get information. If one is meditating, the other is in the library, in deep study and yet another in the store cutting vegetables or praying. All this is service, to Thakur. What noble persons you find there ! And so many of them are B.A.'s and M.A.'s.

“The Gita says that one should minutely observe the behaviour of the *Sthita prajna*, a man of steady wisdom. Then only one will try to emulate him. Are they not ideal ? Knowing that one can compare oneself with them, ‘I am down below’, with this awareness, one would feel the desire to raise oneself. I am an old man. I cannot go there. Sitting here I get all information. What they do and what I do—this should be compared daily. Then alone one would wake up. Those who are educated and well informed, by living for only two years in the Math are rising so quickly. On seeing them I feel so.

happy. And why should they not rise ? On the one hand, they are observing brahmacharya, on the other they are trying to call on Him with their heart and soul. And they have sufficient leisure.

“And what do wordly people do ? Entangled in different wordly matters, they have no time to call. Even if one sits (for meditation) for a while, one dozes off in no time. The body is tired. One sits down to melt gold, it is about to reach its melting point. Suddenly orders are received from home : there is no rice in the house. He gets up to bring it. He sits down again and there is a message : the daughter is ill. He immediately starts for the doctor. So the gold never gets melted, the fire burns out. If one leads a wordly life after melting gold one does not feel so much of pain and misery. Melting gold, that is to say, to gain jnana and bhakti. The sadhus are always attempting it, all the twenty-four hours.

M. (To the householder bhaktas)—Thakur would sometimes say : You are married, let it be. It is better to discharge a seer or two of semen, but let there be no children. With children, how would you get leisure—with the upbringing, education and illness of the son and the marriage of the daughter ? Prahlad said to the Daitya children : Look here, don't marry. If you do, you will not get any leisure. You will have to think of your daughter's family. There was a certain Mahendra Mukherji. He had many occupations. He would often visit Thakur, and say : I am now thinking of leaving everything to my sons and retire. He would bring two of his sons with him. Thakur would listen and say : ‘Yes, but how is it coming about ?’ One gets always entangled with one thing or the other. They think : Let me put this matter on finer grounds. And the days pass off in this manner. The Captain also said the same but could not do it. One should live in solitude for some

time, then one realizes what is the duty and what is not. Not world first God next, but God first world next."

It is evening now. M is meditating in the company of the bhaktas. After the meditation one of the bhaktas sings : 'Mother I am so frightened.' Now the Bhagavata is being read. Engaged in tapasya Shukadeva listens to a divine voice : 'I exist becoming everything.'

M. (To the bhaktas)—This is a great mantra. If one were to live just with this, one would perfect oneself. Thakur also used to recite a mantra, daily after the sunset : '*Brahman, maya, jiva, jagat...*' Taking up this for japa, one can also perfect oneself, that is to say, realize God. He used to say : These are highly esoteric mantras, that is to say they are all in the books and can be read there. But if they have to be transmitted it should only be to bhaktas, not to others.

'Brahman, maya, jiva, jagat'—this oft-repeated great saying has, as if, assumed a new living-form today.

Calcutta, 30th May 1923 A.D.

16th Jaishtha 1330 (Bengali year)

Wednesday, the 1st Day of the Dark Fortnight.

KESHAB SEN RECOGNIZED THAKUR

1

Prayer and worship are over. M is seated in the room on the first floor. Sukhendu is singing along with the bhaktas : 'A new person has arrived. Come along if you wish to see him.' Now M himself sings—

1. O Mother Shyama, Thy name is the only refuge.
2. Does everybody attain the Treasure of Shyama ? Does everybody get the Treasure of Kali ?
3. The bee of my mind is immersed in the blue-lotus feet of Shyama.
4. I don't take wine. I drink nectar, uttering : Victory victory to Kali !

The singing of hymns is over. M is silent for a moment. Thereafter, he begins to talk in a low voice.

M. (To the bhaktas)—One day, he sang the song, holding the hand of Keshab Sen—'The bee of my mind....' and another day, in October 1882, Thakur went to the house of Kesab Sen. Having dressed he was leaving for Din Mullick's ? But then he did not. In the Hall upstairs, in the Lily Cottage what a dance ! Forty one years have gone by but it appears as if it was only a moment ago. It still blazes before my eyes. Keshab Sen could not depart. It means, by seeing him (Thakur) all karmas are reduced —क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्मानि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे । With his shawl on his shoulders, Kesab Babu kept listen-

ing to the song fully absorbed. Another day, he sang : "We are afraid to speak, and we are afraid of keeping mum, too. We suspect lest we lose you, our treasure. We give you the mantra (counsel) that we know—the mantra by which one gets the life boat to cross the sea of misfortunes. Now it is up to you." He sang it keeping Kesab Babu in mind. Ah ! Only Keshab Sen could understand him. Had it not been so, could such a song come forth from his mouth? "We give you the mantra?"—Mantra means : God is real, world transitory—this is his great saying. All the disciples of Keshab Babu were unsympathetic. That's why 'we are afraid of saying it'. Only Keshab Sen could understand Thakur.

"Thakur told us : One day, I went to somebody's house. He asked me to go to the shrine. He said, "In that room, God is worshipped. Please go in once and sanctify it." As soon as I entered, he shut the doors and began to worship my feet with flowers and sandal-wood paste. And he said, "Please don't reveal this to anybody." Why did he forbid ? For his own gurudom, isn't it ? Lest the disciples should create trouble."

A bhakta is going to Mihijam today. He intends to live in solitude and meditate upon God. Coming to the verandah, M is bidding him good-bye. Some bhaktas are talking in the room : He is going to carry out tapasya. Hearing this, M says—

M. (To the bhaktas)—One should not say such things as 'he is going to carry out tapasya' or the like. Those who are real friends do not mention such matters : who does what for God. Somebody said to him one day, so and so practises a lot of devotions, carries out tapasya. Hearing this he scolded him immediately and said, "For shame! Such things are not to be talked. God is a very secret treasure. It is His arrangement that one should call upon him longingly in solitary retirement." He himself

went this way, didn't he ? Ah! Even if for a day, He is called with one's whole heart in solitude it would take away his regrets. The rishis did it throughout their life. 'Even doing it for a day one succeeds', so said Thakur. How easy he has made it ! Oh, how much he has condescended ! How beautiful is the will of Thakur ! He has arranged for a hut in Mihijam with a straw roof. A most solitary spot. There, one sees His benign hand (making the sign of protection) on birds and animals. What a maternal affection ! And then, it isn't so far off either, just at a safe distance from botheration.

"Why this tapasya ? All this arrangement to realize Him. One has come to have human birth after so much of trouble. When this body goes one cannot be sure. Today it is, tomorrow it may not be. Therefore, finishing up the work quickly, the more one calls upon him the better. The same he said to Adhar Sen. Sometimes we come across a person or two calling upon Him longingly. Let the body go, it matters little. Had there not been something known as death it could have been otherwise. But it is a stubborn reality. At any moment everything can pass away. That's why some are up and doing. Thakur always liked to remain surrounded by bhaktas—some of them taking to japa, others to meditation and yet others to singing."

Viren enters the room. He is an attorney. He begins to talk on different matters. While talking he says : "In Europe, they now talk to spirits. Information about the dead son of Bhupen Babu is now available."

M.—Yes. But Thakur used to talk to God. One day he said, 'Ma has come.' And then he began to talk to her. Said he, "Well Ma, whom should I listen to ? One says this, another says that." Ma perhaps said something, so he added, "Oh, I understand. I shall only listen to you, nobody else." And he said another day :

"Well Ma, suppose a person is hungry and he does not say so, does it mean that he is not hungry?" Yet another day, he said, "Ma has said : I have accepted him." And another day he said, "He has been given only a fraction. Well, just with this your work will be done." In the beginning he used to say, "By living with woman and gold, my body burns. And I cannot bear it, Ma." Ma said, "Wait for some time ; pure sattva bhaktas will all come." He had to wait for twenty or twenty two years. At the time of Aarti, he would climb to the roof of the Kuthi and call out : "Oh, where are you all ? Do come please. My body is burning all over." Throughout the night, he would roll on the ground in the Panchavati and weep : "Ma, reveal thyself, reveal thyself. Ma!" What a yearning! Thereafter, she revealed herself and talked to him. (To Viren) It is all right, talking to spirits. But Thakur would talk to God, always. What have we done about it ? God Himself has come down as Thakur, as an avatara. And then he would talk to Him in the form of the Mother of the Universe, just as we are talking now. Not once, throughout his life. God-Thakur-Ma—three forms of One.

31st May, 1923.

## 2

The evening is past. M is listening to the readings from the Bhagavata along with bhaktas, in the room on the first floor. Subject : Dispassion of Shukadeva. Dr. Bakshi is reading.

The Reader (Reads)—Seeing Vedavyasa, his father overwhelmed with attachment for his son, shivering and shedding tears, Sukadeva was wonderstruck and said humbly to his father : Oh, how strange is the power of Maya ! Even the author of the Vedanta, the speaker of the Puranas, the composer of the Mahabharata, the compiler of

the Vedas, the omniscient, born a portion of Vishnu, Vyasa Deva too bewitched by Maya, is bewailing like the vulgar, having been overwhelmed like the merchant who has lost his ship.

“O Goddess Mahamaya, I bow to thee. I take refuge in thee.”

M. (To the bhakta)—Just see, how wonderful the power of Maya is. It is not possible to be clever with her. Even Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are bewitched by Maya. Vedavyasa is overwhelmed by the loss of his son—he would take to sannyasa and depart. On taking a body it has to be so. That's why Thakur used to say : Entrapped by the five elements even Brahman weeps and laments, and he would pray, ‘Ma, do not delude me by your world enchanting Maya.’

The reading continues.

M. (To a person)—सर्वं खल्विदमेवाहम्—this too is a mantra. By repeating it, one can succeed. Brahma-Shakti said this to Vishnu who was lying on a leaf of the banyan tree. This is the essence of the Veda. ब्रह्मशक्ति, शक्ति ब्रह्म—Brahman is Shakti, Shakti is Brahman ; ब्रह्म माया जीव जगत्—Brahman is maya, jiva and jagat—these are all the great mantras of Thakur. The Absolute Brahman becomes qualified in His Lila—divine play—the lila of God, the lila of the devas, the lila of the world and the lila of human begins.

The Reader (continues reading)—Shukadeva says, “Father, who you were in your previous birth and who I was is not a certainty. Therefore, give up grief. Having had a rare birth in the human body, the only duty of the jiva is to try to gain *mukti*. Even if one tries one cannot get rid of the feeling : I am bound. Kindly tell me the way out.

M.—Illusion, attachment, ignorance are all one, but they appear in many forms—sometimes as sons and daughters, sometimes as wife, sometimes as parents. Wealth and possessions, name and fame, body, senses, violence and envy—all these are different forms of the same. All these are Avidya-Maya. With Vidya-Maya, the mind remains attached to God. God alone is one's own, not the family members or the world. So, by thinking : 'I am free', one can get rid of the feeling 'I am bound'. This is the function of Vidya-Maya.

"That's why Thakur could never ask for anything worldly. He used to say : 'Grant me only pure devotion at Your lotus feet. Why ? —By asking for other things, the mind remains attached to them. The lotus-like feet will be forgotten, that is the reason. He would say: 'Ma, money and wealth are so dear to people ; give these to them. But what an ignorance! That You are the greatest wealth, this they have forgotten'. So many people would go to see him but he never asked anyone for money. What a hardship! The members of the family are starving, nothing even then. So many times, he would be annoyed on being pressed. (Laughing) He used to say : 'There is no begging-bowl here !'. When one asks for money people don't come. A certain person was earning five hundred rupees a month. He would walk down on foot to Dakshineswar. He thought Thakur would congratulate him. But the opposite happened ; he was displeased. Whom could he congratulate ?—The poor, of course. The poor devotees would bring two pice worth of ice or a pice worth of cardamum. How much pleasure therein ! She makes one forget everything through Her Maya. She also made Vyasadeva forget by his attachment to the son, not to speak of ordinary men. That's why he used to pray : 'Don't make me forget, pray don't.' सर्वस्वत्विदम् ब्रह्म —God Himself resides in all this — this is said by the Veda. All this, that is to say, differ-

ent things, the world. Giving up 'different things', to attach the mind to God. God first, the world next. Maya makes one take it in the reverse order—The world first, God next. That's why Christ said : Before Abraham was, I am. (St. John 8:58) This also is a mantra; if one thinks over it one would be liberated.

June 1, 1923.

### 3

Today, Saturday. This is the day when many bhaktas visit here. The whole room is full. Shachi and Durgapada have come after many days. Lalit has come too. He is the nephew of Hriday Mukherjee. M makes them sit close to him with much care and respect. It is evening now. As desired by M, the Doctor sings an Agmani song along with the bhaktas.

Song :—This time, I shall not let Uma return once She comes. Let them speak ill of me. I shall not listen to anybody.

Next, Lalit recited a hymn in praise of Ramakrishna. M introduces Lalit.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur used to live in his (Lalit's) ancestral house at Siur, sometimes for a month, sometimes for two or three. Such a high ancestry he has ! It was in his house that Thakur said to Hriday Mukherjee : 'You feed your kith and kin, so I leave your house just now.'

Lalit began to narrate the stories of Thakur's lila, current in his home. During the talks he said : These days nobody cares for us. Only the rich receive consideration. Sadhus live in high style, they drive in cars but would not care for us. On being contradicted a little one of them was even about to beat us.

M. (Laughing, to Lalit)—To be struck by sadhus is something fortunate. Chaitanya Deva also used to be sometimes. The bhaktas would say : This is the prasada of beating. (In a serious mood) What you say about driving a car, it is like dressing up of Trilanga Swami. Whether he is dressed or is naked he remains Trilanga Swami. What discomfort the sadhus bear outside, you do not see. All you see is their driving cars. How many times have they to go without food or have insufficient food. Sometimes they sleep on stone, sometimes on grass and sometimes they live with wild animals in the jungle. People do not see the discomfort of tapasya, what they see is the little outward comfort. Living in the Math is like living in a rest house—like the bird who after being tired out perches on the branch, just like that. The name and fame for which the worldly people's mouth begins to water, the enjoyments, wealth and possessions which keep them so engaged have all been renounced like the droppings of a crow by sadhus. Nothing worldly of this nature do they want. What had they not ? In intelligence and education too, most of them are of the highest order. What could they have not done, staying at home ? They have renounced all this. On the other hand, we live forgetfully with all that. On being scolded by a sadhu or even when given a blow, one should pay homage to them with folded hands. Can we afford to judge them ? How great the Ashrama ! They have understood that God is first, the world next. That's why they yearn for God, renouncing all.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Even though they may not say, "Do come in Sir. Do sit down", what does it matter ? That we could have a look at them is in itself such a great luck, and also that they speak to us. It is such a great ashrama, so Chaitanya Deva prostrated himself when he saw the gerua. The western (western to Bengal) sadhus do not let the householders sit on their asana, lest their

impure thoughts may pollute theirs. The sadhus of the Math don't do that much, however. Besides can it all happen in one day ? How can you have the 8th day Birth ceremony, the weaning ceremony, the marriage of a boy, all in one day ? You, must keep on going—gradually you will be able to see their inside. Even if sometimes they look hard from the outside, you must try to enter within, you will find them tender. What else can they do if not be considerate towards the rich ? A man wishes to donate three lacs of rupees, the earnings of his whole life to a temple. Now if they don't even talk to him, how will it be ? Besides, they have very little time to talk at leisure. How much service (they are rendering)—hospitals, dispensaries, schools, relief work and preaching. Keep company of the sadhus, you will realize how great they are. You may read a thousand books, do what you will, nothing will avail—you will have to bring the notation of the music to your fingers.

“Those who have not had much learning of this side (ie. secular) and yet are sadhus, are even they like us ? They are also very high. Reason ?—How great is their ideal. He who is God, who came down as a human-being, that Thakur is their ideal. What a great ideal ! The standard of greatness here is discrimination, dispassion, knowledge and devotion. A person who is an expert in some branch of learning or science is also great. But for that reason, is he as great as the one who has renounced his all for God ? Never, never. Mere learning was called ‘grass and weed’ by Thakur, when he came down from samadhi. He asked Bankim Babu in Baintola, in the house of Adhar Sen, what is the aim of human life. Bankim Babu replied casually : “Food, enjoyment and sex-pleasure.” Scolding him immediately, Thakur said, ‘You are so mean. You live with these things day and night ; that’s why these very things are coming out of your lips. If you eat radish you belch radish.’ That’s

why one should not see the shortcomings of sadhus. How high is their ashrama ! Sadhus always deserve our reverence. Parched rice and sugar-candy should not sell at the same price.

M. (To Jiten the Elder)—Thakur used to tell, there are three kinds of sadhus : the first, with the nature of a python, they keep lying. If something falls before them, they eat it, the way the python does. They would not move from their seat ; they are always meditating upon God. The other class—they call out ‘Narayan-Hari’ at the door of the householder and wait. If they are offered some food, well and good, otherwise they depart. And the third one—If they are not given anything they compel and insist. Sadhus are also with rajas and tamas. Thakur used to say : I did not have such belief in the beginning. I used to think all sadhus are with sattva. An old sadhu corrected this mistake of mine. There are all the three gunas among sadhus. Take for example, Durbasa who was with tamas. Was he not a sadhu for that reason ? What a great rishi he was, the incarnation of Shiva. Those with rajas preach and establish maths and temples. The ones with sattava are always plunged in His thought—like Shukadeva.

“A sadhu came to the Panchavati. Clattering with wooden sandals on his feet, he appears in Thakur’s room and says, “Do you have anything like a hubble-bubble.” Thakur immediately stands up and joining his hands says : “Yes sir, I have.” When the sadhu had gone Bhavanath said : “I see a lot of devotion for sadhus in you.” At another time, a sadhu appeared in Thakur’s room. As soon as he entered he said : “I need eighty rupees. Hire of a carriage etc.” How can it cost so much ? Thakur said : “My God ? Where will so much money come from?” The sadhu then replied : “You are a stay-in sadhu, you have your bedding and all other necessities. As for me I am a wandering sadhu.” At last somebody

drove him out of the house. Such was his own conduct. He would always ask the bhaktas to keep company of sadhus and serve sadhus. If one did not do so of his own accord, he would make him do it by force. He was a first class physician."

The story how M served the sadhus in the Panchavati at the instance of Thakur (See page 164) was then narrated. Keeping company of sadhus and devotion for sadhus are the first steps of a religious life. First of all, one should ascertain one's own footing in the scale of evolution : where do I stand. If one starts by saying that all are equal, then what progress is possible?— A sure way to destruction.

2nd June 1923.

4

Today, the sky is overcast. That's why the heat is unbearable. M is seated on the floor along with bhaktas. It is 8 p.m. Reading from Devi Bhagavata is going on: Arrival of Shukadeva at Janak's.

The Reader reads :—Shukadeva said : Maharaj, having been directed by my father Vedavyasa, I approach you for insight into the Ultimate Reality. Janak said : For human-beings, Brahmacharya, Garhasthya, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa, the four ashramas should be lived in successively. Now, you should adopt the Garhasthya ashrama. You will perform the prescribed actions with calmness and honesty of purpose, established in the spirit. You will preserve same-mindedness in gain and loss. The mind binds the man and the mind frees him too. 'I am Brahman'—this you will meditate upon.

M.—This is the common rule but there is the rule of exception too. Thakur also used to advise the householder disciples. You will renounce mentally. You will give up

the fruit of action to God. Taking part in daily satsang and prayer, you will occasionally retire into solitude. Why did he advise so ? If asked to renounce completely, they would be alarmed. The desire for enjoyment persists. After living a worldly life, when desires are done away with, to some extent they will be able to devote themselves whole-heartedly to Him. This is the common rule. But why should those who have finished with their bhoga, in their previous birth get into this mess any more. They will immediately embrace sannyasa. 'The world is a burning fire', said Thakur, 'who cares to enter this burning furnace willingly?' That is why it is said in the Jabala Upanishad : As soon as you feel a distaste for the world, you should renounce. This view, it seems to us, is very consistent. We shall have to accept the principles of eligibility otherwise it will lead to fanaticism. The same rule will not suit all.

The reading continues—"Janak says to Shukadeva : You will perform religious activities, such as yajna, knowing them to be prescribed duties. Desire and I-ness excluded from action, the action takes the complexion of non-action.

M.—Here he has spoken of work without attachment—a nice thing. Very difficult, though. Desire means attachment. Interest, one does not know where from it comes in—Self-interest, the basis of the world. And the moment one's interest is touched a little one turns into an enemy. There was an incident in Bhatpara. The guru advised the disciple : Don't appropriate the wealth of others—even if it be a lac of rupees. The disciple did not listen. The guru cursed the disciple in the neighbour's house. The disciple on hearing it said, "A curse for me ! I am also a Brahmin. I also curse him." (Everybody laughs loudly) Such is the world. That is why the guru many a time does not tell anything directly to the disciple. If the guru had asked for a share from the

worldly point of view, the disciple perhaps would have been pleased with this business. Himself he (the guru) has taken nothing and on the contrary he asks the disciple to give up everything. What a frightful thing for the worldly people ! Such is attachment. The Kathopanishad speaks of *shraya* and *praya*. *Shraya*, that is truth, justice, God ; *Praya* means world, enjoyment, other's wealth. People want *praya*."

The Reader reads—Shukadeva said : "Maharaj, living in the world how can the mind remain steady ? It always remains scattered in different matters. How can the worldly person be detached ? How can he get rid of the feeling of distinction between friend and foe ? How can the sense of possessiveness in wealth, riches, kingdom be got rid of ?" Janak replied, "If a *jiwan-mukta* can think of himself as a bodiless *atman* though living with a body, mind and senses, why cannot the same *jiwan-mukta* realize that all this wealth, riches, kingdom, kith and kin are neither me nor mine ?"

M.—Thakur used to say : Janak carried out *tapasya* standing on his head. Thereafter, realizing God, he lived in the world at His bidding. How many persons are becoming *jiwan-muktas* ? But Shukadeva could give this argument. Those who have worldliness in their nature, they should live in the household, also carrying out *tapasya* first, keeping the company of *sadhus* and gaining *jnana* and *bhakti*. Otherwise to keep the brain cool is very difficult. Falling once in the meshes of woman and gold, there is no way out. Today, all is well but the least disturbance will reduce one to smithereens, say, the wife commits adultery. A rent collector had an assistant, a good fellow. One day, he collected a lot of money. At night the assistant, in his greed for money cut the throat of the officer and finished him. The next day, going to the police-station, he himself reported the matter.

Such are the affairs of the world. It has just been read out that Vasishtha and Nimiraja were respectively the preceptor and disciple. Since the latter got the yajna performed by some other priest, Vasishtha pronounced a curse on him. Nimiraja too threw a counter-curse at him. As the result, both had a fall. Such is the business of the world. One cannot realize that one is going down—the path is of the shape of a nib, sloping down. Living in the household after realizing God, Janak Videh (the Bodiless), otherwise Janak, the producer of children.

Calcutta, June 3, 1923 A.D.

20th Jaistha 1330 (Bengali year)

Sunday.

## WHICH BINDS ALSO FREES

### 1

Now the evening is past. M is seated with a number of bhaktas on the first floor. It is very sultry and the heat is oppressive. The climate of Mihijam has made him quite healthy. He was living there like a lion in a jungle. The climate of Calcutta had adversely affected his health, always cold and cough. So, mostly reading and praying are the rule these days. He sings a song : "O Mother Shyama, the picture of the waves of divine drunkenness ! Who knows your mood in your divine sport ?" In the meanwhile arrive Swami Sadbhavananda, Satish Nath and Niranjana of Chittagong, also a musician friend. Niranjana is studying in the 4th year of the Ashtanga Ayurveda Institute. The accompanying musician sang a hymn of praise : By whose birth this holy land...?

M. (To Niranjana)—Ayurveda! the Veda is that whose author is God Himself.

Niranjana—It should be read after reciting a verse in praise of God in the beginning. The medicine should be administered also after reciting His name.

M.—Your Ayurveda is born of the maxim शरीरम् आद्यम् खलु धर्मसाधनम्—The body is the first requisite for the practice of dharma. The rishis have done all this. Chavan Muni speaks of living in solitude in consumption. Isn't that so ? Well, does it also mention such matters as purifying the mind, keeping company of sadhus ?

Niranjana—If there is no devotion or faith, all treatment goes in vain—it says such things.

M. (To Kartik)—Well, Doctor ! Do you have any such thing concerning God in your Allopathy ?

Doctor—No, nothing as such. It is solely based on science.

M.—Yes, that's because they are epicureans. They do not like to go beyond the domain of the five senses. But there is so much above the senses. The body, the mind, the jiva-atman and God, they are all interlinked. Mostly the mind is the cause of ailments of the body. The rishis knew this, that's why they invoked the aid of God and mind when treating the body. The other day, the annual meeting of an institution named Vatavasa was held in London. It was attended by the representatives of all countries. That meeting requested the Calcutta University to introduce Ayurveda in its curriculum. The entire letter was written out in Sanskrit.

Some of the bhaktas have left and others have come. Now the Kathamrita is being read. Shachi is reading. Thakur is telling about the 'home' of the bhaktas.

M.—'Home', that is the high ideal which he gave. Holding on to it, now climb up. The 'antarangas' are those who come daily, without caring for inconvenience and trouble. The 'bahirangas' are those who come occasionally, get instruction and go away. They are like the internal and the external wooden posts of a thatched house. The jiwan-mukta is one who while still breathing has understood that the body and the soul are different. Not I and you but all You. The body is the hurdle. So long as there is fast circulation of blood this knowledge eludes the common man. When the body begins to ebb out, one understands it as all the play of Maya. It makes one think of this unreal body as atman—अतस्मिन् तद्बुद्धि—

—All men are but dancing marionettes in the hands of the Puppet-man. Recognize His hand and you are a *jiwan-mukta*.

Jiten the Elder—"You are going on well", if this is said by a great man, one feels reassured.

M. (laughing)—Yes. There is another opinion too : If one assures too much, it harms. This opinion of the minority is right.

"I saw in Kalna that people were getting into a boat from a steamer. What a laughter and merry-making ! A person was smoking the hubble-bubble and a young-man quietly lifting the *chilam* started puffing at it. My God ! Just a wave raised by the steamer ended all this. A wailing and everything vanished ! Like the foam of the wave, twelve to fourteen persons disappeared into the water. Everything wordly is like water-bubbles—it is there now, it is not there the next moment. (To Jiten the Elder)—If that is not so where is the whole lot of ancient people ?"

The next day is Thursday. It has rained from 5-30 to 6-30 in the evening. Even then bhaktas have turned up. Haren Babu, the disciple of Nityagopal Maharaj has come too. After the dhyana, he has performed the Chittaishwari Kirtan. Thereafter, M sings along with the bhaktas, clapping his hands—

Salutations to Hari Hara, salutations to Krishna Yadava,  
Salutations to Yadava, Madhava, Keshava,  
To Gopal, Govind, Rama, Sri Madhusudana.

In the court-yard of Srivasa this was Sri Gauranga's first song. Now talk is going on with Haren Babu concerning Nityagopal Maharaj.

Haren (To M.)—His sense of taste was completely gone. One day, he drank the Koifish water adding salt and sugar.

M.—The person in samadhi almost loses his external consciousness, merged as he is in God. Thakur would carry his lower cloth in his arm-pit, stark naked like a child of five, uttering 'Ma, Ma', the outer consciousness almost gone—in the world but not of the world. Mind and breath merged in the contemplation of God. Samadhi has different states. Sometimes, it was seen that he could not quickly raise his hand any further—fully unconscious as he was. Once, down below they were singing : 'Wake, wake up, Mother Kulkundilini !' As he heard it he went into samadhi. He was at meals but could not raise his hand. When he came down from that state, he said : Take me there. The man in samadhi is like a sleepy child—the mother thrusts something into his mouth and he eats it without being involved, mechanically—the way the engine is fed. Thakur gave another simile. Arjuna had no interest in any direction, neither in the crowd of rajahs nor in the court—his eye was fixed on the right eye of the fish, nothing else. Then alone the target was hit. Such is the mind of a man in samadhi, fixed on God alone. A child went to see the bioscope. He was only hearing the orchestral music. No awareness of anything else. We said, "Why did you not see a little ?" He said, "That wasn't possible. Had I seen a little I would have been tempted to see more of it." Wasn't it interesting. The boy only heard the concert. This shows that a person who can concentrate so much here can also do so in divine matters. If one engages the mind in different matters, it will not do.

Haren—Khan Saheb can divine what is in one's mind.

M. (neglectfully)—That's something Thakur used to call siddhi (occult power). Thakur could not tread that path, for example curing a disease and so on. He would say : It is for this that he made doctors, kavirajas. He who sincerely wants God does not care for all this. This

leads to a downfall. Unless the whole mind is given to Him, He does not reveal Himself. Where is the time to engage the mind elsewhere ? That's why Christ said : For all these things do the nations of the world seek after ..But rather seek ye the Kingdom of God, (St. Luke 12:31)"

"Thakur lived like a child in the mother's arms. He knew the Mother alone, none else. When asked by Nava-gopal Babu to bless him, he said : "This is not for me to do. Ma knows all. The same thing he said to Keshab Sen's mother when requested to bless her elder son. Putting his hand on the body of her son he said : "You see I can't afford to bless." Can a son bless when his mother is present. The mother knows everything. The life of an avatara is a criticism of the existing spiritual matters, his entire life is nothing but that".

June 6, 1923.

2

Morton School. 8 p.m. In the first floor-room more than thirty bhaktas have assembled. M is seated on the floor. Gokul Babu, a University teacher has arrived. Harendra the teacher is singing—

Look at the Beloved of Hara, who says She is dark of complexion ? Is my Mother Shyama black ?

Professor Gokul Babu sang—

O' the King of kings, reveal Thyself !

I beg for Thy compassion. Look at me with Thy compassionate eyes.

O' The Refuge of the lowly, Your holy name is beautiful !

Amulya the Elder sings—

Which will be that day, Mother Tara, when streams of tears will flow down my eyes while uttering Tara, Tara,

Tara. Cherish tenderly within your heart the revered Mother Tara.

Haren sings again—

O Lord, Thou art my all, the support of my life, the essence of essences.

I have none but Thee as my own in the three worlds.

Thou art my joy, peace, support, refuge, treasure, wealth, knowledge, intelligence and strength.

Thou art my home, my rest my relation, friend and family.

Thou art my present, my salvation, my future and my heaven.

Thou art my scripture and injunctions too, thou my wish-yielding guru, the fountain-head of my never ending bliss.

Thou art the means, the end, Thou art the creator, the sustainer and the adorable one.

Thou art the chestising father, the tender-hearted mother, the pilot who steers across the sea of life.

M listens attentively to the song. Even when over, he maintains a silence for a while. Now, he asks Jiten the Younger in a sweet voice to give a description of the Math.

Jiten the Younger (To M.)—This morning, Mahapurusha Maharaj was speaking to Bhava Maharaj, "Now you should go and settle down at Jamtara. What use is you wandering? Repeat His name, perform japa and dhyana. All that is needed will come automatically."

M. (Joyfully)—I also said the same. He came four or five days ago. I said, "In Vaman Avatara, Bali was asked to give away only three strides of land for carrying on tapasya. On the other hand you have got so much

land. Now sit down and repeat His name." If one calls upon Him sincerely, He arranges for everything.

Amulya the Elder—A person can get on with three rupees a month if he lives on dal and rice only. For three persons, nine rupees are enough. Doesn't that suffice even ?

M.—You don't have to calculate your three rupees in this way. He Himself makes every provision. Can the word of the Gita be wrong ? योगक्षेम वहाम्यहम्—Everybody has an inward craving for God. When that works correctly, everything comes automatically—whatever is needed for preserving the body, just as the moths and insects of the rainy season appear as soon as they see light. So many people come to serve one who calls upon Him sincerely. He sends them all. The disturbances caused on account of physical necessities and hunger are removed by Him. The bhaktas serve such a man. Where do people find a genuine bhakta who calls upon Him with single minded devotion ? It's like a man who makes a fire having collected fire-wood with great difficulty. Then many come and warm themselves. How easy for the latter, they just find the fire ready. If one is genuine He sends bhaktas and makes all arrangements for the subsistence of his body. Then it is possible always for him to remain in communion with Him. But one has to be genuine.

Shukalal—Manoranajana writes : Here in Mihijam nothing is wanting.

M.—How could it be otherwise ? There is no question of want. All one need do is to boil a handful of rice and a little dal. (To the bhaktas) Thakur told a bhakta (Holy Mother): "Your cottage will be there. You will take vegetable and bhat seasoned with salt. If you can get one or two sugar-drops (batashas) in the evening well and good, otherwise you will take simple water. You will

repeat Hari's name all the time. You must, of course, have your own cottage."

"What do the sadhus care ? Do they owe anything to anybody ? With householders it is slightly different. They have to deal with many minds. Vegetable and rice is all right for oneself but why should others be satisfied with that ? So Thakur would say : You should keep them under control like the corpse in shava-sadhana (spiritual practice on a dead body). As soon as one sits over the dead-body in this sadhana, the body immediately opens its mouth. The spirit of the dead takes possession, you see. At once parched gram and wine are thrust into its mouth. The dead body then keeps on munching it—kar ! kar ! and in the meanwhile the sadhaka finishes his japa.

"The slavery of others is all due to luxury, superior clothes, superior jewellery, carriage, house—all these. If so much is not needed, there will be no slavery. Vidya-sagar Mahashay gave up his job. He was a principal, getting five hundred rupees in those days. What a spirited man he was ! He said : "I am a Brahmin. I shall beg three handfuls of rice from three doors; boiling it I will take it with a pinch of salt." Why should he put up with the shame of servitude ? Such a great will power ! If wants are not reduced it is not possible to lead a simple life. And if the life is not simple, the life of dharma is not possible.

8th June, 1923.

3

Morton School. Roof of the 3rd floor. After-noon. Annada Thakur of Adya-Pith has arrived. M is happy talking on different matters with him.

M. (To Annada Thakur)—Thakur used to say : Woman and gold bring a downfall from Yoga. In one of his

states, he would keep himself covered with a thick wrapper, lest the breath of woman and worldly men should touch his body. About one person, he said, his state was that of a paramahansa. He was warned against mixing too much with women. He did not listen to it. Later on he suffered a downfall, it is said. When divine emotion rises in the heart, it should be preserved very carefully—the way grapes are preserved in a box in cotton-wool. He said, 'Even if one is a paramahansa, for teaching humanity, he would not live in the company of women'.

Annada Thakur heard these great words seriously. Taking a little of sweets, he left after some time.

It is half past eight now in the evening. Harendra the disciple of Nityagopal Maharaj is performing the *kirtan*—Salutations to Hari-Har, salutations to Krishna.... The *kirtan* is over. He requests M to talk on Thakur to his companion who is in European dress.

M. (Laughing, playfully)—'O my friend, we are talking of your beloved, Shyam'. I narrated the story of Thakur to an expert in Nyaya (one of the six systems of Indian Philosophy)—two men entered a garden to eat mangoes. One of them began to take mangoes as soon as he entered, the other only looked round the garden. And the time being over, the gardener asked them both to leave. He who had taken mangoes left happily. His companion could never eat mangoes. That is why Thakur used to say : You have come to eat mangoes, do so (that is call on God). What use is all this information—the number of trees, how many thousand of leaves etc.? He would say : How many cash certificates of the Company (East India Company), how many houses, how much money Yadu Mullick has—what use is all this information to you ? Meet Yadu Mullick first in whatever way you can. If necessary, you will know all about it from him directly. Yadu Mullick, that is God. First of all, one has to see

Him, other things come afterwards. He said the same to Keshab Sen : You may read a thousand books and deliver lectures. Nothing will avail. He used to call a mere pundit as a kite or a vulture. They fly quite high up but their eyes remain fixed to the cremation ground, that is, to woman and gold.

"So many Brahmo boys, twenty two or twenty three years of age, went to meet Thakur in the company of Vivekananda. Thakur said : First dive deep. Swimming over the surface will not do. The priceless jewels that lie hidden in the bottom are not visible to you. That is why you may do what you like only after having dived and securing jewels. 'Diving, 'that is having His darshana, after practising sadhan-bhajan. Thereafter, you will do as He commands you. God-realization first, all else later. He used to recite a beautiful rustic verse : There is no Madhava (idol of Vishnu) in your temple. Why have you raised such a hue by blowing your conch-shell ?

"In a certain village there lived a boy, Padmalochan by name. People used to call him Pado, for short. One day, they heard the sound of a conch-shell at the approach of the evening. The villagers thought that somebody had installed a god in the nearby dilapidated temple and that the aarti was being performed at the moment. The young and the old, women and men, all reached there hurriedly. One of them slowly opened the door of the shrine and saw Padmalochan standing aside and blowing the conch-shell. No god had been installed ; the temple not having been swept, the droppings of the bats were lying about everywhere. So he said shouting at him, "Where is Madhava in your temple ? Why should you have raised such a hue blowing upon your conch-shell ? Eleven bats are hovering day and night in it."

He explains now. "If you wish to instal Madhava in your heart, if you wish to reach God, of what use will

be the blowing of the conch-shell ? Purification of the mind is the first condition. When the mind is cleansed, Bhagavan will come and occupy this purified sacred seat. With the droppings of the bats there, Madhava cannot be brought down there.

“Eleven bats connote the eleven senses : five senses of knowledge, five of actions and the mind. First of all, to instal Madhava, then if you like talks, lectures and the like.

“Calcutta used to have so many lectures in those days, you see. That is why he narrated this story. Merely blowing the conch is just lecturing which does not serve any purpose. Madhava to be installed, that is God to be realized.

“Before going to Thakur, we used to visit the Brahma Samaj. There they delivered so many lectures. Listening to them, it appeared as if God was very far away. I felt no joy. Lo ! when I go to him (Ramakrishna) I see that he talks to God—as if a member of the family. The avatara is a grand mystery. It is not possible to understand him. But we should put faith in whatever he says. Even Arjuna could not recognize Him (Lord Krishna) but believed in his word. स्वयंचैव ब्रवीषि— You yourself are telling me.

“Thakur said: ‘Think on me, that will do. Nothing else will be needed’. We must think on him. Christ said : ‘...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.’ (St. John 14:9) Reason?—‘I and my Father are one.’ (St. John 10:30) In Mihijam, I used to see shepherds in the countryside uttering: Burur..Burur (like the sheep). I used to wonder why they did so. Later on, I understood that they were talking in the language of goats. Otherwise how would they understand ? It is just the same with avatars. Becoming human-beings they do all just like men. If one

develops faith in their words all is done. Thakur, Christ, they are avataras."

Amrit—Is that why they also have sorrow and disease, sadhana and tapasya, everything like human-beings ?

M.—What else ? The avatara is just a form of Satchidananda. What is disease and sorrow for him and what is sadhana and tapasya ? For teaching humanity, for giving us hope they assume all this. In the Traita-Yuga, Bharadwaj Rishi said to Rama, "You are that Satchidananda Parbrahman. You have assumed this human form for our welfare." It is very difficult to recognize an avatara.

It is very hot. But M is indifferent to it, fully plunged in the talk of God. So long a bhakta has been fanning him with a palm-leaf fan. As soon as he notices it, he points with his index finger towards the bhaktas and says, "Fan them, fan them." The Yogis are same-sighted in all physical matters, they see God in all. (Pointing towards the bhaktas). They are all different forms of God Himself, aren't they ? Living in the world those who can see in this way have conquered the world, one should know."

Amrit (To M)—Sir, what is the meaning of *sama-darshana* ?

M.—He who sees Him in all physical matters and sees all physical matter in Him, that He lives becoming all. It is He who lives inside and it is He who lives outside. *Sama* means God. *Vishama*, the material world—unity and diversity.

(To bhaktas)—"Vivekananda meditated upon Mother Kali for a few days. Then he said to Thakur, "Why sir ! Nothing has come about (that is, seeing of God and so on)." He was a believer in God without form in the beginning, wasn't he ? Hearing this Thakur said,

In Darjeeling, the cloud looks like smoky vapours, and the same falls in the form of snow in flakes. In the same manner He who is formless takes up a form. Be patient and do something. You will surely see (Him)."

Devi Bhagavata is being read out. The first cause of the world is being ascertained. Neither Vedavyasa nor Narada nor Brahma nor the traditional gurus have been able to settle the issue. Brahma heard a divine voice : Practise tapasya. You will know Him. After the tapasya of one thousand years a divine voice said again, "Create the world." To know who was saying so, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva began to search and came to know that Bhuvaneshwari Shakti (the Creative Power) of Brahman is the First Cause of the world.

"There are many other beliefs concerning the First Cause. Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Surya, Indra, Varuna, Soma, Pavaka, Pavana, Yama, Kuber, Ganapati—all these are said to be the first cause of the world by different sects. The munis say that the unqualified Brahman is the cause of the world, others say it is Purushotama. Yet others say that the world has come out of nature itself, there is no creator. The Sankhya takes Prakriti cum Purusha to be the cause."

M.—Lord, how many doctrines ! Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva went up and saw that there existed Brahmas, Vishnus and Shivas greater than they—it is an endless business ! Who can solve this riddle. Thakur said : The whole affair of Maya is so confusing ; it cannot be understood. Thakur, therefore, used to say : 'Ma, I don't even want to know all that. Only grant me faith and devotion at Thy lotus-feet.' There is no end. We have heard it from the guru's lips, from the mouth of the avatara : That which is Adya-Shakti (the primordial power) creates, preserves and destroys the universe. That which is Shakti is Brahman. When it creates, preserves, and des-

troys we call it Shakti. When it exists in its real nature, I call the same Brahman, like the snake crawling in a zig-zag manner and remaining in a coil. This is Shakti and Brahman.

“The very problem of man is to know the cause of the world somehow or the other. Putting one’s faith in the word of the guru, one should set about it in right earnest. All this cannot be settled by one’s own intellect. Who has such a power? The gods exerted so much, then only they could know. During the Kali-Yuga, jiva’s life is dependent on food, and is short. One can’t afford to take recourse to different means. Retire to a solitary place, weep secretly and say to Him. When He reveals Himself, He tells everything, all that is needed. It is enough for us if we know just this : God is. He does all. He exists becoming all. One has to weep and then He reveals Himself. He did so to Ramaprasad. Thakur also had His first darshana in this way. On having His darshana all doubts disappear. छिद्यन्ते सर्वं संशयाः Thereafter peace, peace, perfect peace.

M. (To the bhaktas, laughing)—Just see what has been read. It says : Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva all the three appeared before Devi in female form. It means that they are all doing their respective work, subordinating themselves to Brahman-Shakti. There is a belief that where the Adyashakti is there all are women. In other words, just as woman is dependent on man similarly Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are dependent on Adyashakti. Woman means a dependent. The Upanishad says : The Brahman-Shakti destroyed the pride of the gods. Appearing in disguise, She gave them a thin straw. The Fire and the Wind could not burn it nor move it a little with all their power. Indra came and recognized Devi. Thakur called that very Adyashakti as Ma and held converse with her as with a human-being. That very Adyashakti is the

avatara, that is Thakur. That is why he would say : 'Meditate on me. You need to do nothing else.' Who but God can say it ?

"And he used to say another thing : If you wish to be the victor of senses, consider yourself a woman. He himself lived in this feeling for a long time. In this way, the distinction between the sexes disappears. He said : I cannot call myself 'Pu' (purusha), that is man."

9th June 1923.

4

A bhakta delivered a copy of the Devi Purana to M. The book had just been brought for M from Bangavasi. It is 5 in the evening. Lalit the Elder, Sushil, Ashwani Chakravarti and other bhaktas are seated there. M is talking to them.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Form, taste, smell, sound and touch which bind a person also free him. This is done just by turning the corner. Instead of the beauty that enchants man one should worship God with form ; for taste, one should take the holy water (Charanamrita) and the rest ; for smell, the flowers of worship or incense or the flavour of the holy food ; for word, the recital of His name and qualities or to hear the same ; for touch, the feet of the idol, salutation to the guru and the guru's hand on the head. Instead of engaging the mind in worldly enjoyments one should bring God within. Doing in this way, when one develops sincerity, the mind gets fixed on Him.

"The dualistic worship of God has this very purpose behind it. Just by saying, the mind does not rise higher. That is why you should accept all that engages your mind after offering it all at the feet of the Lord. The dancing girl, beautifying herself in different ways, dances

and sings. The audience listens. All are drunk. This is one thing. But to dance intoxicated with His name, is another thing. There is a vast difference. On listening to devotional music, Thakur would say : This is the real work. Music unites the mind to God. One gets absorbed even in worldly music. Thakur said : Continuous music is going on in the world. One day at two or three at night, he said this, as he was wandering on the embankment. This is what is called *anahat shabda*—sound without any physical cause. (Striking the ground) This is the *ahat shabda*, sound produced by physical striking. The *anahat* goes on by itself. The yogis can hear it. When all worldly enjoyment has been renounced, when the mind takes no interest in anything here, one hears that sound. Who is a yogi?—One who has renounced all worldly enjoyment. (Laughing) Does any one of you wish to hear that sound, that *anahat* music ? If you do, you will not be able to go that side (to worldly enjoyment). (Laughing) Thakur used to remark humorously : Goshtha (some person) is in great difficulty. He has taken to the life of a Vaishnava mendicant (pecking like a crow from place to place). Doing so, worldly enjoyment is no more possible.

“It is very difficult to renounce the world. Renouncing the world is nothing else but accepting God. Living at home also one can do it. There are some who renounce externally also. But it is very difficult. It is not possible without His grace. While living in the household, it is very very difficult. He touched the chest of Narendra who at once went into samadhi. In that state says he : ‘O Thakur, what have you done ? But I have my parents.’ Rakhal also said, ‘What will happen to my family ?’ This is about the best, the most eligible. If this is their state of mind what of others ? When one lives in a body, it has to be so. With knowledge, there must also be ignorance. Thakur used to say : Avidya is more powerful than Vidya. Even the guru goes down before Avidya. Such a wonder!”

Many bhaktas have arrived. The regular bhaktas are almost all there.

M. (To the bhaktas)—I say why don't the bhaktas learn how to sing and play ? Swami Vivekananda learnt such a lot by his own efforts : the *sitar*, the *israj*, the violin and many more. Now he goes to one master, now to another and this is how he learnt. He would not allow the harmonium to be played lest the sense of the correct musical note be lost. The bhaktas may also learn, sing and play. (To Harendra Master) Can you tell why they don't learn ?

Harendra Master (Laughing)—Lest they should be found out in case they fail. (Everybody laughs loudly.)

M.—Well, well. Here you cannot deceive. But then, if one cannot do this how will one attain God ?

Harendra Master—But sir, one can deceive in this. (All laugh loudly.)

M.—One can deceive also in the matter of God. But Thakur used to say : He who can keep an account of salt can also keep account of sugar-candy.

At the behest of M, Lalit the Elder begins to read from the Devi Purana. By the time, the first three chapters are read out it is evening. Giving up all work everybody takes to dhyana. After the dhyana, Jagabandhu again reads out the fifth and the sixth chapters.

M.—It talks only of work with a motive and of worldly enjoyments. The occult powers were called 'the excreta of a prostitute' by Thakur. Sri Krishna said to Arjuna : By siddhis, occult powers, one can have all comforts of this world but 'Me he will not have.' A pasture field, a river bank, a temple, the company of a bhakta, all these are the right places for the reading of the Puranas. This one is beautiful. (To Antevasi) Oh, how one used to walk on

pasture lands in Mihijam ! The Devi Purana says : A terrible *Daitya* was a devotee of Narayana. He never did any wrong, but he could not manage his son. He wanted to expand his kingdom. (To Shukalal) Just see. One fails to manage his son.

A bhakta begins to narrate some incidents from the Ramanuj Charit—the life story of Ramanuj and Yamuna-charya. The bhakta sings many songs. At the end M sings—चिन्तय मम मानस हरि चिद्घन निरंजन—‘Meditate, O my mind, on the Lord Hari, who is consciousness rarified and spotlessly pure.’

M.—This song was sung by Swamiji (Vivekananda) when he was 18 or 19 years old. (He had) the voice of a Gandharva. On listening to him Thakur went into samadhi in the northern verandah. This was my first darshana of a samadhi.

Calcutta, 16th June, 1923.  
Saturday.

# ONLY THE JEWELLER KNOWS THE JEWEL

## 1

Morton School. The open courtyard in front of the house. Benches all round. The bhaktas are there. M is facing the west. The Amherst Street is in front at a distance of ten cubits. Gagan Vishwas has come for the first time today. He is a retired engineer, seventy one years old, England returned. He is conversing with M.

Gagan (To M.)—Well, how does one know that an avatara has come ?

M. (To the Doctor)—Which is that verse in the Gita ?  
Doctor—

आहुस्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिनारदस्तथा ।

असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे ॥

(Gita 10:13)

M. (To Gagan)—स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे—You yourself say, I am an avatara. And Asit, Deval, Vyasa, Narada, all of them say that you are an avatara. So I believe it. Arjuna was so highly competent. Even he not recognizing Him put faith in their words, not to speak of others. If He does not declare it Himself nobody can catch Him. Thakur himself says: Satchidananda has come in this body. He said with his own mouth: 'I am an avatara.'

So we believe in his words. Have we the competency to recognize Him ? We are a can of just a seer, how is it possible to put ten seers of milk in it. So मन्त्रमूलम् गुरोर्वक्ष्यम्—The word of the guru is the basic mantra. It is not possible to recognize Him with our calculative 'chira-bheja' intellect' Do you know that story ?

Gagan—No sir.

M.—Thakur used to say : In that country (Kamar-pukur) they have different kinds of curds—the pure, the medium and the one thin as water. This last one does not require any water to be added to it, for soaking dried rice. The *chira-bheja* intellect is just like that, in other words it is a low intellect, an intellect just to gain woman and gold. The intellect which serves to gain wealth and name, which makes a judge or a barrister has been called 'chira-bheja' intellect, that is worldly intellect. Thakur used to call it also '*randdhi-puti buddhi*'—the intellect of a widow's son. The son of a widow grows up with great hardship; that's why his intellect is so narrow, that is, worldly. One cannot attain to God with this intellect. If that is the aim, one needs a superior intellect. The persons with the worldly wisdom have been called बालाः in the Veda, that is child-like, ignorant. Again, they are धीराः who only want Him—their intellect is superior. The best way to know an avatara is आगम. It means revelation. This is the word from His own mouth.

Gagan—The atheists do not believe in the avatara.

M.—A bhakta pointing towards a person said, 'Here is an atheist.' Thakur, when he heard it, patted the fellow on his back and said, "Oh, no, why should he be an atheist when he has come here ?"

(To Gagan) Why do you say this ? Just by saying, one does not become so.

So many say when arguing that they are atheists. But they are not.

Just by calling yourself so you do not become. You have sanskaras within you. They will pull you out forcibly”.

Gagan—He used to frequent the Brahma Samaj. He also recognized Keshab Sen. He also referred to Shivanath very often. But Shivanath would say : “By calling out God too much one loses the head.”

M. (Laughing)—A bhakta, having taken offence said to Thakur, “Shivanath Babu takes you as an ordinary sadhu.” On hearing it Thakur replied, “Then why are you peevish about it ? Listen to a story—A person had a piece of diamond. He wanted to sell it. So, he took it to a brinjol-seller. He said, “I shall give nine seers of brinjol for it.” The cloth-merchant similarly said, “I shall give nine hundred rupees.” But the jeweller immediately offered a lakh of rupees.” It is the same, one can take from a receptacle what it contains. Only the jeweller knows the worth of a jewel.

“In the beginning, Narendra used to say : All these (seeing God and samadhi) are just hallucinations. When Thakur heard it he told the Mother about it. The Mother said : ‘How can it be so, son ? Since everything conforms’. He said to Narendra, ‘I cannot accept what you say, since Ma says everything conforms.’

“God talks. He has talked in all countries, in every age. While some have collected his words, others have not. In this country, Vedavyasa preserved all these matters. Later too, so much is being done. What comes out of the mouth of an avatara is all revelation.”

It is evening. All have taken to dhyana. After the dhyana, a bhakta from the Bow Bazar sang two songs, and another person sang three songs of Ravi Babu, Tagore. Then all the bhaktas sang together—'Can everybody gain the treasure of Shyama? Is Kali's treasure for everybody? This foolish mind does not know what this treasure is. What a pity!'

M.—Can any one sing the *Vihaga raga*? It is very sweet. The gopis used to sing it while returning, having met Sri Krishna at about 10 or 11 at night. In the six ragas and thirty six raganis, I feel like calling Him. If only somebody had taught me to sing!

Gagan—It appears from the songs of Ravi Babu that though he was a Brahmo, he believed both in God-with-form and God-without-form.

M.—How could it be otherwise? Didn't Thakur say: When you believe in light you also believe in darkness. These are all co-relative terms. My first encounter with Ravi Babu was in Nandan Bagan. He was twenty years old then. A friend who was with me introduced me to him. (To the bhaktas) Has any one of you read the 'Post Office' of Ravi Babu? (To Gagan) Faith in God is a necessity for man. And of the two, God with form and God without form, having realised one, the other comes by itself.

July 12, 1923.

## 2

Today also, Engineer Gagan Vishwas is here. Some thirty five bhaktas have assembled. After the dhyana M asks Kamal to sing two songs. Kamal sings—

1. Who wants to go to Gaya, Ganga....
2. The bee of my mind....

Now Gagan Babu puts a question to M.

Gagan (To M)—Does man have a free will ? Is man free or divinely determined ?

M.—In the West, so many great persons have racked their brains on this subject, on the problem of free will and predestination. Thakur on the other hand, just gave a short story and solved this problem. He told Keshab Sen : “A landlord had an assistant. He used to supervise his estate. He would also consider the complaints of the tenants. One day the landlord himself came to inspect. His court-room had a big sheet spread out on the floor. At the head, the landlord sits supporting his back on a big pillow. The assistant is standing. All the tenants have arrived. As was customary, they are filing their complaints—so and so has done such and such thing to us. The assistant points towards the land-lord and says: ‘Today, the Master is himself present here. Tell him all you have. I have nothing in my hand.’ Today, the Master is present, so the assistant has no authority.” Exactly in the same way one begins to understand with the realization of God that God alone is the doer, man the non-doer. Till one sees it that way, one feels as if one is free. After seeing God, one realizes that all is determined by God. “I” is nowhere to be found, just as it happened in the case of Thakur. The people of that country (West) do not even know what is God. How can they understand all this ?

Jiten the Elder—Does God carry on His world-play under the subordination of Maya ? Is Maya greater than God ?

M.—What is the use of such big talk ? Our business is to see ‘Yadu Mullick’. Meet Yadu Mullick and you will know all. Now our effort should be how to meet him. Yadu Mullick, that is God. As one enters the market place, one can see everything, understand everything. From a distance, it is just a noise : ho. ho. Effort is neces-

sary to enter within. Did he (Thakur) only say this ? No, he told the way also. 'One day, three days, seven days, or a month as convenient to be spent in solitude', he instructed, 'Live in solitude, weep and pray: No one but You I have as mine, O Lord. Reveal Yourself and gratify me.'

(To a person, laughing) "It does not mean going to one's brother-in-law's house. The avatara has come down now. It is a big chance. The way has become so easy. One has only to act on what he had said and it is done. To read such and such scripture, perform such and such yajna, all these are not necessary. Weep and cry, call Him longingly. If sincere, He listens to all. The child has been crying for an hour but the mother, closing her door keeps on working. As soon as she sees that he has become desperate she gives up her work immediately and takes him into her arms. God also does exactly the same. He wants that people should cry for Him.

"We ought to listen to what the avatara has said—it is all a revelation. It is ever going on. In our country, only Vedavyasa has made a few compilations. It (the revelation) was there before him, it was there after him and it will be there in future—'Before Abraham was, I am.' (St. John 8:58) What has come out of the mouth of rishis, what the avatars have said—all these are revelations. God has no end nor His revelation, the Veda. The Veda is His utterance, that is why it is superhuman revelation. Except through the Veda, the essential nature of God cannot be ascertained. The same thing has been called differently as noumena by Kant, substantia by Spinoza and Brahman by the Vedanta.

"This world is His play. He feels the urge to play. He has created, He Himself has become everything and it is He again who pulls it out and carries it away from

this confusion. It is his cherished desire that His children should call Him as they call their worldly parents. He has two departments—yoga and bhoga. He looks after all, the yogis want Him alone. It is for them that the avatara comes. He has come and said : 'Meditate on me sincerely. Thereby you will attain me.' Those who belong to the department of bhoga are also not forsaken. It is said that the goddess Sinhavahini commanded Mullicks that on the Mahashtmi Day (of the Durga Puja), all the members of the household including the servants should appear before the Mother in new clothes. This was the cherished desire of the Mother. Even today they do the same. Though they belong to the department of bhoga, Mother does not forsake them. Till the bhoga is quenched, one cannot get Him".

A bhakta—Sometimes one feels a great longing, at other times it completely disappears. Why is it so ?

M.—The company of the holy is a necessity. The mind is unsteady. If this is done, it will no longer be so. One ought to do it every day. If this is not possible at all, one should daily find time to meditate on His lotus-feet. His image, His great sayings, His life stories, all these are the subjects of meditation. The fundamental is to live constantly in communion with Him, like the unbroken flow of oil. The yogi is he who has subjugated his mind, who has the control over his mind, not controlled by his mind—'in the world but not of the world.'

14th July 1923.

### 3

The festival of the Ratha-yatra today. M had been to see the Ratha. Today Gagan Vishwas has again come, also a doctor from Vikrampur. Surrounded by the bhaktas, M is seated in the room on the first floor. After the dhyana, Ramni sings—

'Let him worship Him who is the nearest to his heart. As for my mind it is only attracted by Gaura, the beloved son of Shachi'.

Gagan (To M.)—Why did Thakur take offence when called Baba (father), karta or guru ?

M.—To teach his disciples. Would it have been safe had he done so ? Everybody would have set himself up as a preceptor. He used to say, 'The only guru is God, Satchidananda, none but He'.

Gagan—Well, the believers in the doctrine of Maya call the world as illusion, how so ? With our little intelligence we fail to understand it.

M.—Thakur used to say : What use are such things ? How to attain Him should be our first effort. By crying secretly in a solitary place with a longing heart, He reveals Himself. Then all becomes clear to the intellect. Vijay Babu was a member of the Brahma Samaj. In the beginning, he used to say: 'God with form, how is it possible ?' Hearing it, Thakur would reply : "What need have you of all this ? You should call Him with a longing heart and say, Lord whatever you may be, reveal yourself to me. Then you will know."

"Thakur had seen God. He would say : God is with form, He is without form and He is also...what not. He used to tell the story of a chameleon.—A particular spot was frequented by a person. He would see a chameleon on the tree in front, red in colour. Somebody else came and said it was green. Calling it blue, yellow, red, they began to quarrel. Then they happened to meet a person who lived under that tree. The latter said, "It is a chameleon, sometimes it is red, sometimes green. Blue, yellow, so many different colours it takes. Similar is God.

"All these truths cannot be understood intellectually. He makes one understand and then one knows. For it tapasya is needed. They are not the subjects for the intellect or learning. Had it been so, the learned—M.A.'s and B.A.'s—would have had the monopoly over the nature of God. But that is not so. One cannot gain Him just by learning. Discrimination and dispassion are needed. If these are there one feels like taking to tapasya. When tapasya puts an end to the desire for enjoyment, the mind goes wholly towards Him. The thread is passing through the eye of the needle. But the moment there is a loose fibre it refuses to go in any more. It is the same with God-realization. Even with a drop of desire for worldly enjoyment it does not come about. Christ said to a devotee : Come giving away all your possessions if you wish to be with me. The latter could not do so. Instead, he sat with his cheeks within his palms. '....the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. (St. Matthew 8:20) Christ renounced his all for Him, so he understood Him. Those who are the beloved of God, those who are the sons of God, them He does not bind in bhoga. He said to Vivekananda : You can have rice and dal, nothing more than this. Look at the Pandavas—though living with so much of wealth their inside blank of desires. As soon as Sri Krishna had left, they also forsook their throne and set out on the Great Journey. You see, they never stayed back to rule. It was at the command of Sri Krishna that they waged the War and ruled. So much He got done through them to serve as an example. They lost their kingdom, their sons, and underwent such hardships but they were not concerned at all. They were only at the beck and call of Sri Krishna, all of them.

"Tapasya reduces worldly attachments. That is why Pippalayada Rishi said, "Carry out tapasya for a year and come back. Then I shall answer all these questions."

Without it even the question cannot be rightly put how can the reply be intelligible. Even for posing a question, tapasya is necessary. Tapasya means sitting alone and thinking over life and death—there should be no family member there. Somebody may cook food for him, otherwise he may cook it himself, and repeat Rama-Rama the whole day. Carrying it out even for a few days, one begins to understand a lot—Where I am and where I have to go.”

The doctor from Vikrampur—Sir, is initiation necessary ?

M.—Thakur used to ask some to take initiation. Again, some others have such capacity; they begin to feel a thirst for God by themselves.

The Doctor from Vikrampur—Have you had initiation ?

M.—Such things are not to be told. These things cannot be valued in terms of money. This is an invaluable wealth. It leads one to gain Life Eternal. It should all be kept secret.

Gagan—The Gospel makes one feel that you were always with him.

M.—No, but he used to say : ‘Even a drop from the sea of immortality makes one immortal, so does a bucketful from it.’ This is the only hope. I am only trying to preserve a bit of it. ‘It is not possible to record all he said’, said St. John\*.

The Doctor from Vikrampur—Sarat Maharaj also told me that on holding on to Thakur one need have no fear. It is the same you say.

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\*‘And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.’ —St. John 21 : 25

M.—No, no. This is not what we say, this is what he says. He said, "Think on me. You will have to do nothing else." What is the value of our words? It is his great saying.

"An avatara cannot be understood unless he himself makes one understand. He incarnates in every age. When the yajnas had become just mechanical came Lord Krishna. Coming down, he interpreted the Vedas, and gave their true meaning through his Gita. The Yoga of Work-without-fruit, the Yoga of Devotion and many other things he taught. And besides, he saved the sadhus. This is his main work. And now that Thakur has come, this too is to save sadhus. When the sadhus go astray, He himself comes to raise them,—

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मं संस्थापनार्थं संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

(Gita 4:8)

—For the protection of the sadhus and the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of Dharma, I am born from age to age.

M. (To Gagan Babu)—Give up bhoga, this injunction is not liked by the worldliminded. If the guru says, 'Give up all for the sake of God,' they immediately react : What kind of guru is this? He asks us to give up all. If, on the other hand, he were to say : You are going to have money or son, he is respected. Thakur was keen to see how the bhaktas could realize God ; that they should be eligible for the greatest of wealth. No other talk. What use are son and wealth? Death stares in the face."

The building of an orphanage collapsed in Calcutta,

and many children died. Referring to this incident, M says—

M. (To the bhaktas)—How can we, human-beings, understand His working? Looking at His work superficially it is not possible to judge. Just see. The orphanage fell down. In one blow, it took a toll of forty three lives on the same stock. Innocent they were all, these children, they used to offer nimaz (Muslim prayer) five times a day. People opine what an injustice it is from God. How much of His work can we see, how much of it can we understand? During the floods of 1885, so many persons lost their lives. Many people began saying, what an injustice of God! Hearing it, Thakur rejoined, 'Well, suppose He took them to a higher place?' This silenced them all, just this. It is not possible to understand the working of God.

"And this very incident, how much education it is imparting? Firstly, they were all sinless. It is possible He took them to Himself. Secondly, it has served as a warning to so many. They have started repairing their old houses. The corporation, the government, their attention is all diverted to this work. Thirdly, the bhaktas will learn that the body may go any day. Then, they will start calling Him longingly. This world is a big cremation ground. Fourthly, He who loses a son will find consolation. Forty three of them died together and who is mourning their loss? Whereas I cry so much just for one—this consolation he will get.

"That is why it is not proper to pass remarks on God's work. We only see a little superficially. If we have to opine, it should be after considering the whole context. But the context of God's work is known to none but He. Therefore, all judgment is improper. Somebody has written that the world is a light, like the light of a police-sergeant. The sergeant sees everybody but we cannot see him. When it is turned towards us we can see him.

Similarly, when He makes us understand His work, we can understand it. It is not for man to understand His work."

15th July, 1923.

## 4

Today again the Car Festival, today again Engineer Gagan Vishwas is here. M is seated with the bhaktas in the room on the first floor. It is 5 p.m. The Kathamrita is being read out—'The day of the Car-Festival—Sri Ramakrishna's meeting with Pundit Shashadhar.' He is teaching the pundit—Bhakti of Narada suits the Kaliyuga.. the learned having no discrimination and dispassion are not learned at all.....unless commissioned by God, one cannot teach humanity.....so I tell you : Get absorbed at the lotus-feet of God. Now M asks Mohan to sing a song. Since Mohan does not know it thoroughly well, M himself begins to sing, completely losing himself in it.—

"Dive, dive, O' my mind, dive deep into the sea of His beauty. By fathoming the bottomless, you can reach the priceless treasure of His love."

The song over, M talks—

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur sang this very song to Keshab Sen. He also sang it for Pundit Shashadhar. They used to lecture so much, you know. That is why he said : "First accumulate something by tapasya, then people will listen to your lecture. Unless you are commissioned who would care to listen to you." If one talks at God's direction, it gets impressed on people's minds. Just see, for whom was this teaching imparted ? For those who are the elite of the society, who are recognized by all. Did he tell them only, 'Lose yourself at the lotus feet of God ?' No, he said it to all, indirectly through them.

These persons were the best of men. Telling them was telling everybody.

M is again singing along with the bhaktas.—

—O my mind, meditate on Lord Hari, the rarified spirit, the spotless one.

What a matchless lustre of His bewitching beauty, the attraction of the devotee's heart !

—Lo ! the full-moon of love rises in the firmament of my soul.

The ocean of love swells, O what a delight!"....

—The bee my of mind is drunk deep at the blue lotus-feet of Shyama.....

—Who wants to go to Gaya, Ganga, Kashi, Kanchi, and Prabhasa.

If I can breathe my last repeating, Kali, Kali, Kali on my lips ?

—O the Divine Consort of Siva, the dispeller of fear, I have taken Thy name.

The singing of the devotional songs is over. It is about 9 p.m. The Kathamrita is being read out again—'Sri Ramakrishna in the holy residence of Balaram on the last day of the Car Festival?' Jagabandhu is reading—When the intellect does not make any distinction between the Ganga water and gutter water, you will know that the state of perfect jnana, has been reached.

M. (To the bhaktas)—In the state of perfect jnana dying and killing appear to be the same. The perfect jnani does not die when killed by somebody, neither does he kill when he kills. He has no pride of individuality. He has attained the knowledge of being one with the Universal Spirit. That is why the Gita says : न हन्यते

हृन्मने घरीरे (2:20). This was coming again and again to my mind for several days, after the death of the forty three children.

The Reader (reads on)—Of what avail is mere learning? Some tapasya is necessary, some effort and practice.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Tapasya means thinking over what the guru or the scripture says, thereafter to sit alone and meditate over it. Then alone the attitude will attain perfect maturity. The mind is dragged in ten different directions by the ten organs. It will have to be turned towards God—it will have to be led in the opposite direction. When living amidst a thousand worldly botherations, this is not possible. Therefore to sit alone in a solitary place and meditate over it. When intellectual conviction ripens, bhakti and jnana are attained. Thereafter to live in the world. When once this is achieved no harm can come. A tiny plant has to be reared, its trunk to be fattened. Thereafter, even if an elephant is tied to it, it does not fall. This is what is meant by tapasya—to fatten the trunk.

The Reader (reads on)—The first sign of jnana is a quiet nature, second pridelessness. There are many other signs of a jnani: all renouncing in the company of a sahdu, a lion in the field of activity, as when lecturing, full of wit and humour in the company of wife.

M.—Thakur used to say: He who has jnana also has ajnana. On going beyond jnana and ajnana one is a vijnani—the state of a paramahansa. In that state, one becomes either like a child, or a mad man, or a stone or a pishacha —just like Chaitanya Deva or Thakur. Say, one day somebody is answering the call of nature when a jujube-berry falls before him. He immediately starts eating it like a child. (To a bhakta) Do you hear? Thakur is saying: 'One should always be engaged in re-

membering Him and thinking on Him and a burning faith : I have once recited the Rama-nama, how can sin touch me ?

16th July 1923.

5

Two sadhus have arrived today from the Belur Math. To see them off, M comes up as far as the Amherst street, in front of the C.M.S. College. On returning, at the turning to the Machhuwa Bazar, he goes to the house of Brajendra Ganguli and having exchanged a few words with him comes back to the Morton School. It is now 6.30 in the evening. Before the bhaktas have assembled it is already evening. After the dhyana a bhakta sings : 'The bee of my mind is drinking deep at the lotus-feet of Ramakrishna'. The song ended, M says : Please sing : 'Ma, Thou Thyself art Tara'.

All the bhaktas sing—

'Ma, Thou Thyself art Tara, Thou Thyself the stream of three gunas.

I know, O Mother, Thou to be compassionate to the lowly, the dispeller of the hardships of the lone traveller.'

The song ended, Gagan Vishwas asks questions.

Gagan (To M)—Well, what about the sadhana of the formless ?

M.—Thakur used to say, "It is like the fish swimming in a lake or the bird flying in the infinite sky. Jivatman is moving about freely in the Ocean of Paramatman.

Gagan—It is so in the Brahmo song.

M.—No, why Thakur said so had a significance. He said, why dhyana etc. ? —For the reason that one may

be inspired by Him. By themselves, these things are nothing, they are only useful so far as they can inspire. He used to say : Even if a stone is taken as God and meditated upon, He reveals Himself and tells all this. But sincerity is essential.

Gagan—But at the time of dhyana, the mind does not get concentrated. So many things rise in the mind.

M.—Why will they not ? There is moisture below. There are two pits ; the water in one has dried up but it is there in the other. Why ? Because the latter has a feeder—water comes to it from below the earth. It is the water from some stream or rivulet. Living with worldly matters day and night the mind gets its feed from them. That's why so many different things rise in the mind. This is the reason why Thakur asked us to retire to a lonely and secret spot away from home and call on Him. Just think over it. What have we been doing throughout our life ? While seated amongst these things, they are bound to come to the mind at the time of prayer. So, off and on one should retire to a solitary place.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Those who call upon Him for the sake of money are also large-hearted. There are four kinds of bhaktas—the distressed, the inquisitive, the seekers of wealth and jnanis. All of these are large-hearted. There is a greater manifestation of His in the jnani. The jnani is one who has realized the self or is longing for it, the one with strong faith. The Lord has described the jnani as His own Self. ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् (Gita 7:18). That is why one should seek the company of a jnani and serve him. The reason?—Thereby it amounts to being with the Lord Himself and serving Him. Then the mind becomes steady, different ideas don't rise in it.

“Mathur Babu was fighting a law-suit involving fifty thousand rupees. He said to Thakur, “Father, do please

make this oblation to Ma once." Thakur understood. Later on, a bhakta said to Thakur, "What a narrow mind Mathur has?" Thakur replied, "No, not so. My offering will accomplish the task—see what a faith!"

M. (To Gagan)—One should not get entangled in too much work. Do a little and the daily bread is ensured. Now repeat the name of Rama for the rest of the time. One or two children, not more; now let the husband and wife live as brother and sister. All these paths were shown by Thakur. Just see. What a great bhakta Yadupati Babu was but too much of worldly worries turned him mad and ultimately caused his death. Such a vast property of his is left behind. So Thakur used to say: 'Don't get entangled too much. Arranging for food and clothing—having arranged for coarse rice, coarse cloth for the family, come out and meditate upon God for a while, perform tapsaya for a while.'

M.—On going to rishis with a problem, they used to say : "First perform tapasya for a year and then come." Without tapasya, the problem does not pose itself properly—what are one's doubts one does not know exactly.

Gagan—Pipplayada Rishi said, "Come after tapasya. Pose your problems then."

M.—Yes, that is why tapasya is essential—to sit in solitude and think on God.

Now, the Kathamrita is being read out. Jagabandhu reads : The Gopis too had Brahman-jnana though they never desired it. They just wanted to enjoy God, some in relationship with Him as Mother and child, some as friends, some as Lover and beloved, some as Master and maids.

M.—In the Kashipore Garden, pointing towards his own body, he had said: 'In this very body there are two : the bhakta as well as God. The bhakta is suffering from cancer.'

Amrit—Why two ?

M.—For enjoying the taste, for the lila. Radhakrishna !  
—Radha is only the counterpart of Krishna. Just for this enjoyment, they are divided into two.

17th July 1923.

6

Today after the meditation, M asked Jagabandhu to read out from the Kathamrita, himself opening the book at the 19th Section of Part II. At the insistence of Shukalal, he himself started reading at last. The reading over, M converses.

M. (To a person)—Those who have dispassion in childhood are a class apart—of noble birth, of high family, the purest of minds. The contact with the woman destroys this disposition, lowers it. That is why one must be most careful about the woman when in the state of an aspirant. Woman is a part of the Mother of the Universe but in the state of an aspirant, she is called ‘a deadly snake, a man-eating witch, a lioness, the fire of hell.’ One doesn’t know when she may gulp you down suddenly. So beware ! After God-realization, one sees she is the Universal Mother. For a woman-aspirant too, man is the same. Beware ! That is why he said, “Those who have married should not sleep in the same bed after begetting one or two children.” Just see, he says, that after God-realization, there is not much danger, that is to say that some danger still persists ; mostly there is none. So long as the body lasts, Mahamaya can always bring about a fall. Even so, if one becomes a child in the lap of the Mother like Thakur then there is safety. But such a state is generally not possible except for the avataras.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Sadhana is necessary. Without sadhana it is generally not possible. Sadhana means,

collecting the mind from different matters and fixing it on Him. That is what is called bhakti. One should call him yearningly. He used to say : Bhakti is the essence.

18th July, 1923.

7

Hiralal Viswas has arrived today. He is a master musician. His music has been recorded. He is fifty seven an old pupil of M, and a student of the Ripon College. He is in the Government service. Though unwell, he sang a song. M also sang—

‘Pray come, Guru. Let us both go across. Alone, I am afraid of going.....’

The song over, M begins to talk.

M. (To Hiralal)—How nice, you have taken the trouble of coming in spite of your ill-health. How shall I show you due consideration ? Let me offer his sayings to you. Thakur said to a person, “You don’t need japa and dhyana. Call upon Him by singing His name and He would reveal Himself.” What use is the mere reading of books ? Dharna (impression on the mind) is necessary. And dharna comes by keeping the company of sadhus and putting faith in the word of the guru. ‘The world is a sea, the word of guru a boat.’ Once at mid-day he said this to somebody. Guru means the avatara, God.

Reading from the Kathamrita continues—Part II, Section 29. M talks—

M. (To the bhaktas)—He is a jnani, just saying so will not do. The jnani has characteristics—first, love of God ; second, the waking of the serpent-power. There is no love for God, one merely sits down and thinks

about Him—this is of no avail. When the servant-power is awakened the bhava (disposition), bhakti (devotion) and prema (love) all appear. Thakur used to call it Bhakti Yoga. The pointer of the scale is the illustration of the Yoga. The upper and the lower pointers will be in a line. The flame of a lamp is another illustration—the steady flame of a lamp at a windless moment. The mind will become totally steady, it will lose itself in God. This is the normal state of man. The desire for worldly enjoyment brings about a downfall from the yoga. Sometimes he used to say, 'What if you are living in the world? Only offer the fruit of your action to God.' Then one is a sannyasi even while living in the household. "It is a very difficult path," he used to say. Even so by His grace, it becomes possible with some.

Calcutta

19th July 1923

Thursday

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### RAMA, RAMA, SRI RAMA, JAI-JAI RAMA

Morton School. Late in the evening, after the dhyana, M is humming : Rama, Rama, Sri Rama, jai-jai Rama. The bhaktas are seated on the floor. After the bhajan has gone on for some time, he speaks.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur had once become mad-like repeating this Rama-nama. Sitting in the Panchavati he would cry. I was at Rishikesh, some ten years ago. A Maharashtrian sadhu was living then at the Lachhman-jhula. He must have been thirty years of age, a noble sadhu he was. With him, he had the Narayana-stone (a stone representing Vishnu). He would daily offer food it to, read from the scriptures and then himself eat. We knew each other, so he would send me prasad off and on, as is usual with sadhus. I was then at the Swarga Ashrama. After about a year when I was at Calcutta, I heard from another Maharashtrian sadhu that the said sadhu having built himself a cottage on the bank of the Godavri was repeating the great mantra : Rama, Rama, Sri Rama, jai-jai Rama.' He would carry out this vow of repeating the mantra for thirteen years. It contains thirteen letters, therefore thirteen years. There are still such sadhus who call upon Him with such a yearning.

In the meanwhile arrived Shukalal, Doctor, Jiten the Elder, Vinay, Jagabandhu, Kiran, Jiten the Younger, Shachi, Amrit, Manoranjana, Sudhir, Ramesh, Amulya the Younger, Gadadhar and others.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Why don't you all repeat the same name ?

Saying this, M himself began. Tha bhaktas accompany him singing, Rama, Rama, Sri Rama jai-jai Rama. Gradually the tempo of the song increases. Now it is the repetition of the Name, now M discourses for a while on God and then again the Name. This goes on for a long time. The bhaktas oblivious of all, repeat the Ramana-ma as if intoxicated. In the room, on the first floor of Morton School flows an unparalleled current of divine emotion.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur used to say: The yoga, the sacrifice, the vow, the reading of scriptures, nothing avails; even tapasya is not possible without His grace. When He sees that having renounced all, one is crying and calling upon Him yearningly, facing all troubles, His grace dawns. Then He reveals Himself. Thakur used to say: When one is sincere, He is bound to reveal Himself.

Everybody sings loudly: Rama, Rama, Sri Rama, jai-jai Rama and then stops. M speaks again—

M. (To the bhaktas)—This Rama-Rama, said Thakur, is whispered into the ears of the dying by Mahadeva himself at the Manikarnika (the Cremation ghat at Varanasi). He had himself seen Shiva doing so. (Insistingly to the bhaktas) sing this very name, all of you, sing.

M is himself singing with the bhaktas: Rama, Rama, Sri Rama, jai-jai Rama. After a short while, M converses again.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur had gone to see the play of Dhruva-Charit. On hearing the wailing of Suniti he said: 'Let me tell you something here. On your becoming absolutely sincere He is bound to reveal Himself, He must.' He emphasised it twice, it means that He would reveal Himself without any doubt. But sincere one must be, crying for Him secretly in a solitary nook, not by putting up a sign-board. How? —The same

way as a kitten. Except for its mother, it knows nothing. It just mews. The mother knows everything. Now she places it in a good spot, now on a bad one. Wherever it is placed it just mews. On being so sincere it is achieved; or the way the calf bellows for the cow. When called thus, He comes. That sadhu is also doing the same. Even today such men exist. What a severe penance ! Every moment : Rama, Rama. On remembering such men what a strength comes to the mind ! In India such things are happening even today.

M again sings loudly with the bhaktas : Rama Rama, Sri Rama, jai-jai Rama. He resumes the conversation.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Said he to Vivekananda : 'He who is called the indivisible Satchidananda in the Veda, Him I call 'Ma, Ma', Him I call 'Rama, Rama'. Wasn't Vivekananda a believer in the jnana-marga (the path of knowledge) in the beginning ?

M sings again with the bhaktas : Rama, Rama, Sri Rama, jai-jai Rama. He again imparts instruction—

M. (To the bhaktas)—The Adhyatma Ramayana recounts the story of Sharbhanga Rishi and the perfected Shabri Shramana. They left their bodies in the presence of Rama. Both of them, sitting in two huts, used to repeat Rama, Rama day and night. Shabri had served the rishis. So the rishis blessed her. So she was repeating the great mantra, Rama, Rama. During his exile, Rama showed himself up in their ashrama. Both of them offered puja to Rama. As he was leaving, Sharbhanga said, "Rama, stop a while. Let me give up this old body in your presence." Shramana, the hunter's daughter, offered fruits and roots to Rama to eat. She used to pick fruits daily for Rama. All the fruits remained fresh. At last she also left her body in Rama's presence. That Maharashtrian sadhu is also doing the same. It is heard that some

give up their life by fasting for God. Mahesh, the Veena-  
-virtuoso had done the same. He had played on the veena  
to Thakur. We went to see him. He was living in Kashi.  
His veena was worth two thousand rupees. The raganī  
he had played on the veena for Thakur, he played for  
us too—it was the Kanhra rag.

The Doctor—Sir, doesn't this amount to suicide ?

M.—No. It is not suicide if resorted to after attaining  
knowledge. A person going to Deoghar gave up his life.  
He (Gopal Sen) used to visit Thakur. Having quarrelled  
with the members of his family, he committed suicide.  
When Thakur was asked about it, he said, 'It is not a  
sin after seeing God.' He had seen God, that is Thakur,  
you see. So it was not a sin. (To the bhaktas)—Sing,  
please sing, all of you. Saying this M, surcharged with  
emotion, began to sing with the bhaktas : Rama, Rama,  
Sri Rama, jai-jai Rama.

Talk on God, followed by Rama-Rama—Instruction  
and practice continued together for a long time. This  
combination of jewel with gold made one oblivious of the  
time and place. A wave of bliss spread into the hearts of  
the bhaktas. M again began to impart instruction.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Tapasya is needed. Without it,  
one does not succeed. On performing tapasya, His grace  
descends. A carpenter was working here yesterday or  
day before. He said to me, "Father, you are already old.  
You should go for tapasya." Ah, what an exhortation ! A  
man of India says this thing. Such words of wisdom on  
the lips of an ordinary carpenter ! Such deep knowledge  
persists in the masses of India. This is the real picture  
of India. This is the life-force of India. It is because  
of it that India survives even today. How many kings  
came, how much cruelty was perpetrated but they could  
not destroy India—they could not enter its heart. This

power the invaders did not possess. That's why they have been carrying away wealth and treasure—'gourd and pumpkin'. They could not find a clue to the supreme wealth of India. That treasure lies deposited in the hearts of the Indian people. God is real, the world transitory. First God-realization, the world thereafter. Just see, what a jnana on the lips of an ordinary carpenter. Where else will you find such a thing? Not in that land (the West) is such a thing available. They just care for drinking and such other enjoyments. What great words did Thakur put in the mouth of that carpenter! Thakur had sent him to awaken us. But even so do we wake up? I asked him, "Have you had the company of sadhus?" He replied, "My guru is a jnani."

"Thakur used to say: The oyster-shell keeps floating on the surface of the sea for the water of the Swatinakshatra\*. As soon as it receives a drop, it disappears. It is to develop an oyster within that it drowns itself in the deep waters. In Kashi, it is said, some such thing happened. A certain person knew another as a great soul. Both of them would bathe daily together in the Ganga. One day, this holy man was going up the ghat repeating a name of God. The other person heard that name and immediately ran with it to a solitary nook. He started repeating that very name and meditating on the same. He got drowned into profound tapasya. Such was his faith and such his determination. What need of initiation and the rest? Such a keenness is needed. Listen but once and run. That's why Thakur used to say: 'He who plays, plays with a broken shell.' The carpenter brought me awakening."

M, overwhelmed with emotion, began to repeat the Name. The bhaktas also began to sing with him. Rama,

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\*The Star Arcturus. The rain which falls under this star is said to produce pearls.

Rama, Sri Rama, Jai-Jai Rama. After a short while, instruction again.

M. (To bhaktas)—After renouncing all and going to a distant place, He is seen by performing tapasya. By calling upon Him longingly, weeping for Him in solitude, He is seen. How many nights did Thakur pass in the Panchavati placing his head on a clod of earth? Hearing his wailing so many people would gather round him, console him saying: "Don't cry any more. You will have Him. You will attain." (To a young-man) Cutting through affection is renouncing the world. Affection is another name for the world. Jesus said to a person: Come and follow me renouncing home and family. Breaking the bonds of affection and coming out, this is sannyasa—a complete renunciation. He who has once tasted it, can he live in family any more? Or can he do anything else?.. when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it' (St. Matthew 13:46) in other words, having renounced all he has taken refuge at the lotus-feet of the Lord—sannyasa has come about.

Enter some bhaktas. The talk is interrupted for a while. M talks again.

M. (To Jiten the Elder)—He said to Shashadhar Pundit: You are expecting a whole bunch before climbing up the tree. Take to tapasya first, let there be some hoarding. You can lecture then. What is first—God or the uplift of the country and the lecture?

While talking, he becomes surcharged with emotion and begins to sing.—

1. O my mind, live within thyself. Don't go to any other house.

Desire and you get all, seated there. Search within your inner self.

He is the highest of wealth, that philosophers' stone.  
He can give all you ask for.

What treasures are lying at the door-steps of the  
dancing-room of Chintamani !

2. I have surrendered myself to the Fearless One.  
Am I afraid of Yama any more ?

I have planted the wish-yielding tree of Kali's  
name in my heart,

Having sold my body in the market place of the  
world I have bought the name of Durga.

The Noble Person residing in this body, his home  
I have made mine.

This time when Yama comes, I'll open my heart  
to him, this is my resolve.

The name of Tara, the Essence of Essences, I  
have tied to the top tuft of my hair.

Says Ramaprasad : I have said Durga and am  
ready for the Journey.

M.—'Having sold my body in the market-place of  
the world I have bought the name of Durga'—that is,  
having renounced all, I have made God my sole aim.  
One cannot travel in two directions. When one wants  
God one has to give up the world. Taking up the body  
means world. Therefore, 'having sold the body', that is  
having renounced the world, having given up worldly en-  
joyment, 'I have bought the Name of Durga', 'bought  
one pearl of great price', that is, I have taken refuge in  
the Lord. At first, one moves in both the directions,  
later on one cannot do it any more. On taking too  
much wine one loses consciousness. 'The noble person  
residing in this body, his home I have made mine',  
means I have seen God. Therefore, 'am I afraid of Yama',  
that is, I have conquered death. After seeing God, one  
is no longer subject to birth and death. That is, I have

said Durga, and am ready for the journey. As soon as the body is gone, one attains Nirvana, Mukti.

July 20, 1923.

## 2

Today it is the last day of the Car Festival. In the evening M goes out to take a round of the city. With him are Jagabandhu, Ramesh the Younger, Shachi and Shanti. The main roads of Calcutta are lit with electric lights. M goes through the Machhua Bazar full of joy. Seeing the Nava-vidhana Brahma Samaj Temple to his right, he salutes it with folded hands. Entering the courtyard he says, "This temple was frequented by Thakur several times. He made his thoughts penetrate into Brahma Samaj. Having advanced a few steps to the west he says: "Look here, this is the house of Raja Digambar Mitra. In the beginning, Thakur was a worshipping priest in this very house. I had not seen him till then." Then going a little ahead and pointing towards a house to the right he says, "This is the house of Ishwar Mukherji. This too Thakur visited. I accompanied Thakur to this house on the first day of the Car Festival. Today I have shown you three places. Had the house of Ishan Babu remained with any one of his relatives it would have been better. To this house, I came many times before. Srisha, the son of Ishan Babu used to study with me. Later, he became a district judge. Though so many years have passed, it seems it was only yesterday." M has returned to the Morton School. He is seated in the first-floor-room with the bhaktas. The usual bhaktas are there. Asking the bhaktas to sing, he begins to sing himself—O the Compassionate Mother, to Thy servant....

The song over, he says—

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur used to sing this song, only for this line— 'No sleep on account of your treasure'

—a song of yearning. He would say: There is a treasure in the adjacent room. But the thief cannot enter it. Just as he yearns for the treasure, if one has such yearning, God reveals Himself. When the avatara comes this longing in man increases. It is to heighten this longing that he comes. On coming he says, 'Weep secretly in a solitary nook with a deep yearning and call upon Him. He will give His darshana.' Before the coming of the avatara, people keep on taking the holy dip in the Ganga, perform japa, purushcharan and such prescribed rituals. He comes and says : 'This will not do. Go farther. Weep yearningly.'

M sings as if intoxicated—

1. This time, I have given my full thought.  
I have learnt bhava from one well-versed in it.  
O Mother, I have found a man from the country  
which has no night.  
I do not know what is night and what is day.  
I have rendered barren all ritualistic devotions.

2. I do not drink wine. I drink nectar as I repeat,  
Jai Kali.

When the mind intoxicates a person, he intoxicates others.

But when the wine intoxicates a person he is called a drunkard.

3. What a machine Ma Shyama has built ! What a machine Kali Ma has made !

In this machine, three and a half cubits high, what pranks She is playing !

The song over, M asks Lalit to sing a song. Lalit the Younger sings—

1. O my veena, sing the praise of Hari in a full-throated voice.

2. The bewitching flute of Shyam is ringing...

These songs also come to an end.

M. (To Amrit)—Yes Amrit Babu, please sing. A person was asked to sing. He was so very shy. He said, "Put off the light." (Everybody laughs) But here, it is not so. There is no light at all. (All laugh loudly) Here one may sing. I see, he does not agree to take off the veil. What can one do then? Let it be you then. Lalit sings again: 'Mahadeva, the great yogin, absorbed in the supreme bliss.'

23rd July, 1923.

3

After the evening meditation of to-day, M asks Mohan to sing a song. Mohan sings: 'Beautiful Thy name, O the Refuge of the lowly!' After he has finished, M sings it himself again. Another person sings: 'O my mind, drown thyself in the sea of divine beauty'. This song brings a storm, as it were, in the emotional sea of M. He sings ceaselessly in the state of intoxication—

'The neighbours raise a scandal. They cast aspersions on my chastity because of Gaur. How shall I explain and to whom? O the Friend of my heart, I am dying of shame.'

Mohan—Sir, isn't *koibar* mispronounced as *kaybar* in the song?

M.—No, It is 'kaybar'. This is how Thakur used to sing.

Mohan—But isn't it a mistake?

M.—Yes. You may correct and sing. For me 'His Master's voice'.

Song—'I am without sadhan, without bhajan'. (—A song from Gaur Lila).

M.—A bhakta was singing himself a song in the Panchavati. On hearing it Thakur stood there crying.

—Who goes on the bank of the Surdhani with Gaur on his lips ? It seems Nitai the bestower of love has come.

M.—Thakur used to sing this song pacing up and down his room :

—Gaur and Nitai, you two brothers, so full of compassion, O Lord !

M.—This he always sang. He taught this song to the musicians of Chandi. Now it is heard they sing this song also along with the song of Chandi :

—My Gaur dances in the courtyard of Srivasa with the name of Hari on his lips ;

Dances he in the company of bhaktas in a concert.

—The wave of Gaur's love has touched my body. By its thunder all heretics are crushed and the universe submerged.

I feel I should stand on the bank.

The crocodile of the love of moon-like Gaur has swallowed me, O my Friend.

Who else but he feels for my misery ?

He drags me out holding my hand !

—O Friend, who says I have found Him for whom I have gone mad ?

Mad is Brahma, mad is Vishnu, mad too is Shiva.

These three madcaps together conspired to shelter Nawadwip.

Another mad have I seen in Vrindaban,

Bedecking Radha in the robes of a king, dresses himself up as the watchman.

And yet another mad I found in the streets of Nawadwip,  
With the sadhu's begging bowl in his hand and the nectar  
of the love of Radha on his lips.

Amulya the younger has a sweet voice. On being asked  
by M he sings a song from the Krishna Lila and another  
on Gaurang. M is again singing—

—O the butter-stealing cowboy of Braj, who has robbed  
you of your appellation of Kanahi ?

Where is your yellow robe, where your charming tuft  
of hair ?

Having shaven your head clean, you have put on the  
kopin.

Lost in Hari-nam, together with your companions, your  
eyes

Are brimming with tears, the body shivering, the voice  
breaking with emotion, the hair of the body standing on  
end.

All sing together

—The bewitching flute of Shyam is ringing.

The sweet notes have cooled down my body.

Let me go to the forest where it is ringing.

My cursed life is of no use whatever ;

The bird sings on the fifth note ;

The wind stands motionless listening to it.

That name, at whose mention the water of the  
Jamuna ebbs

And by hearing which the cows start lowing : humba  
humba.

25th July 1923.

It has been raining the whole day. M was held up  
at the Thakur Bari because of the rain. He has just

returned to the Morton School. It is 8 p.m. Many a bhakta is awaiting him. Swami Girjananda of the Belur Math is here.

M. (To Girjananda ji)—Just see, what a dangerous thing the objects of enjoyment are ! It destroys what is excellent in man. Yadupati Babu got caught up in its snare. Thinking constantly of it he turned mad. Ultimately, he lost his life. (Laughing) Thakur taught a woman devotee : ‘Better tell your father, I like to play with money.’ This would appeal to her father. She had her money deposited with her father. He wanted to pocket it himself. Why did he teach this to her ? For they live with that pleasure, isn’t it ? And what with Thakur himself ? A person wanted to offer him ten thousand rupees. No sooner did he hear it than he fainted. I have heard Thakur say, with my own ears, “I had fainted. When I regained consciousness I said : No, brother ! Mother has not kept me in a state like this.” Just see, such a high spiritual state but he does not himself take any credit. So he says : “Mother has not kept me in a state like this.” M repeats these words a number of times, pointing towards each of the bhaktas.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Just see how it is. What are we living with, and what is the state of Thakur. Just at the mention of money, he faints. Yadupati Babu, such a great bhakta and this is his condition, not to speak of others. He lost a lot of money in business. Gloating over it he lost his reason. And he died of it too. That’s why Thakur would say : He who is the beloved of the Lord is only provided with simple food ; nothing more than that. Otherwise he would forget it.

M’s mind goes deep within, with his eyes fixed he is partially lost to the external world.

M. (To himself)—Men mad for women and gold and Thakur mad for God. Men love to handle money. And when they don't get it they go mad. And Thakur faints at the mention of it, touching it is a far cry. The doctor made him touch money with his hand and lo ! the hand twisted and stiffened like a stone, and his breathing stopped !

M was silent for sometime; then he resumed.

M. (To the bhaktas)—'The Imitation of Christ' says : Avoid women, rich men and young men. Thakur also enjoined : Even if a woman is a great devotee, you will not talk to her too much. A person talked to a woman devotee for three hours at a stretch. Another person asked him, "Well, had this person been a man devotee with moustaches would you have also talked to him for three hours?" He replied, "No". Such is the attraction ! Therefore, avoid women. There comes a rich man, with a wrist-watch, a dandy. 'Come in, sir, have a seat'—this is how he is shown consideration. But when the same person appears with a broken umbrella in a dirty worn-out dhoti and kurta does he receive the same consideration in this changed condition ? Loving a rich man is loving gold, that's why : 'avoid the rich man'. And the youngman, he speaks too much. He should say something but he says something else, too talkative. Talking of the drains he would say, 'I saw a Hilsa fish in the drain.' (All laugh). He has no control over his speech, he has a restless temperament. So, avoid the young man.

M. (To a new-comer)—A Marwari bhakta wanted to keep ten thousand rupees with Hriday Mukherji. Thakur did not agree even to this. Why ? It increases work. May be, seeing that there is undue expenditure, he will have to protest. Or, seeing that it is not being spent on noble work, he will have to ask him to do so.

Today, an under-current of sublime thoughts is flowing through M. It is somewhat obvious. Now it manifests itself a little, now it disappears—just like the flow of a mountain stream, now it disappears now it appears again. Perhaps that's why his talk is apparently disjointed.

M says : And he (Thakur) used to say: "There is something (within Thakur), and that speaks too."

26th of July 1923.

Today, the full-moon day of the month of Shravana. It has been raining since morning. Even then the bhaktas are there as before. After the evening meditation, Makhan sings a song at the desire of M.

1. O the insane, you will not be able to attain Ma, unless you behave insane like a really insane person.

Behaving insane hypocritically with a bundle under your armpit will be of no avail.

2. Glory Shiv Shanker, Hara, the Enemy of Tripura, armed with a noose, the Lord of the living beings, trident in hand.

The song has ended. A bhakta is talking about Parvati Mitra, a devotee of Nag Mahashay. A very noble man, he is always busy with puja and worship. He is a Head Clerk in a British firm. He regularly celebrates the anniversary of Nag Mahashay. Hearing all this, M says to Antevasi, "We shall go there one of these days to see for ourselves." The topic of conversation is the schism of the bhaktas.

M. (To all)—But Thakur used to say to Keshab and other bhaktas : Well, why do you take disciples without testing ? One should test by one's insight before accepting them. Otherwise, it leads to serious bickerings. He would say about himself : It is not possible for me

to be a guru, karta or father. I eat, drink and live. It is the Mother who knows all. One day, he said : While going to look for the 'I', I see that Mother Herself is sitting there covering all. He would not take credit for anything himself. What do others do ? If somebody does a little for anybody, he would at once claim, "You did it at my instructions, so you succeeded." It was not so with Thakur. So much he did but he claimed nothing. The others start with gurudom, groupism and what not at the slightest pretext. Thakur, on the other hand, a child in the arms of the Mother.

M. (To an attorney)—Is it possible for everybody to give up all at once ? Just imagine, those who practise gurudom, living with different worldly enjoyments, how can they renounce all at once ? That's why he would sometimes say : "Can it be achieved just by saying so ?" Living within its bounds whatever is possible, the avatara makes an effort for it. The boat is sinking in the storm. The boatsman says, "Don't move. Stay firm wherever you are. I shall take you safely across." As soon as a person gets up, he shouts, "Sit down, sit down." Why ? Otherwise everybody would sink and die. And the boatsman will also go down. Thakur was a perfect boatsman. So he would say : "Live this worldly life of yours—eat, dress and do anything else." But in between he would try to induce that (love for God) within him. When that has gone in, the world would fall apart by itself. The inside would be blank. With what difficulty an individual forms a group ! How can he give it up so easily ? That's why he would let him live with that but would gradually wean him from within.

M. (To a youngman)—When Keshab Sen returned from abroad I was at school. I would go up the first storey and see him writing foreign mail, attending to so many things—editing English and Bengali journals, conducting the Brahma Samaj, marriage and what not. Five years

later, he (Keshab) met Thakur. Then I heard in his sermon matters such as 'God's commission, God's talk and so on.' Many members of his group left him taking him to be crazy. Almost 80% joined the Sadharan Brahma Samaj. He was transformed by the contact with Thakur. He was able to understand Thakur. Otherwise, would Thakur have come to him running in this way? After seven years of this I met Thakur. Then I understood why I had liked Keshab Sen's sermons so much. Which was the fountain from which flowed all these words. I visited the Brahma Samaj throughout these seven years. That's why Max Muller had said, "What is the reason for Keshab Sen's sudden transformation? Why has he changed his convictions so suddenly? It appears some force is acting upon him." Till then, Max Muller had not come to know Thakur. Later on, when he heard about his life he understood why he had changed. He cannot be reached with a calculating intellect. It is beyond it. A higher intellect is needed. And this also is true that everybody does not like the same thing. Some are fond of the world, the others of God. The latter giving up all forsake the world. It is heard that a sadhu, having built a cottage on a lonely spot in Jharia, is absorbed in His thought. Sometimes he lives in the cottage, sometimes in the cave.

July 27, 1923.

5

Today Calcutta is flooded with rains. Many of the main roads are completely under water. Traffic is almost suspended. This is as a result of incessant rains. But even in this distressing weather, the bees of the bhaktas, greedy of the lotus-honey of Ramakrishna, have reached M, the keeper of the honey. It is 8 in the evening.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Achalananda said to Thakur, "Don't you accept Shiva's injunctions?" He used to carry

out sadhana according to the Tantras. Thakur would not talk much of the Tantra and the rest to his bhaktas, but himself he had practised them all. Thakur replied, "What do I know, Brother ? That too is a path, but mine is the Mother-attitude (the attitude of the son towards his mother)". He told Narendra : "Those are all dirty paths—the paths through the privy." One can enter the house through the right door and also through the privy. They are all paths through the privy. He has himself demonstrated in this age that the Mother-attitude is best suited to the age.

M. (To a person)—Who listens if one talks about the *nirjala ekadashi* (complete fasting, even without water) ? The guru who talks about it cannot make any disciples. But if he cures disease just by a pinch of ash or walks over the Ganga, he will have many. Say, "Give up woman and gold" and people will not come. But if you say, "Enjoy the world and also call on God", you are a good guru, in human estimation. What a name he earns ! People would say, "It is only after we came in his contact that we have had this prosperity. And a son was born to us after six daughters by his blessings." Such things happening, many persons flock around. With Thakur it was *nirjala ekadashi*. That's why so few disciples. (Laughing). He said in the Kashipore Garden House : I say, Latu, just count how many have become devotees. Counting one by one, they were twenty one. Thakur, when he heard it said : Not too many indeed ! (All laugh).

M. (To the bhaktas)—One night he was asleep in his room after having bolted it. A chaise and a pair appear. A babu said, "You will have to take a little trouble. Such and such Mullick is suffering from the swelling of a testicle." (All laugh). Thakur replied, "That person lives in the Panchavati." When the visitor found that

he had come to a wrong place, he apologized and left. One day a woman said, "Please get me my paramour through your magic charms." Thakur said, folding his hands, "I don't know all this, Mother." (All laugh.)

The highest ideal of human life is God-realization and the highest duty, repeating His Name, not worldly enjoyments. It was to fix this great mantra firmly in the minds of the bhaktas, that M had today taken recourse to this unique way of amusement.

M. (To the youngman)—After taking sannayasa, one should live incognito for twelve years. When devotion to the Lord has developed and He has been realized one may come and meet the kith and kin. By living nearby, there is the danger of a fall. A person, after embracing sannayasa, lived at Kashi for eight years. The members of his family came to know of it and went there. One day, the wife's sister catches hold of him and says, "Well, you have got angry on such a small matter. Sister had caused a little delay in serving rice. Why, come home." (Everybody laughs aloud). She drags him out and takes him along. Just imagine, delay in serving rice should bring renunciation. (Laughter) The wife stands at a distance with a veil on. For long she has been without a husband, therefore such modesty ! (Laughing) and there is more to it—'To be continued'. The sister-in-law says, "And what is this queer dress ? Now put on this cloth." Saying so she pulls out his gerua in one stroke and wraps the dhoti round him. The poor monk has not the strength to protest. Thus it happens. There are some who have returned home after staying in the Math for a year or two. It is indeed a difficult business. A post-card worth a pice changes the mind. That's why one should not meet anybody till one has realized God. Rather, it may be done later on. But in the beginning a do-or-die resolution is necessary.

M. (To Antevasi)—Well, how did you find them ? How did the Nag Mahashay Celebration go on ?

Antevasi—They are such great devotees of the guru. The photo of Nag Mahashay was worshipped but Thakur's photo was not visible. The home is like a big temple. Both husband and wife are ever busy with puja, preparation of the sacramental food and so on. They have two sons. They too are like them. Except for prasada they eat nothing. Such a thing is not generally seen. They frequent the Math rather rarely.

M.—Yes, they have found a forest of the sandalwood. But they must not stop at that. Thakur used to say, "Advance further. There are so many mines ahead, of silver, gold and diamonds." (With smiling eyes) The go-between went to fix a marriage. When he found the girl pretty he married her himself. It may not end like this ! Beware, Sadhu !

M. (Profoundly to the bhaktas)—Thakur knew every weakness of the bhaktas. Lest one should fall later on, he would warn beforehand. So many ways he would employ to save. He would find fault with nobody. For he saw that Mother makes one do all, that all are enchanted with Her Maya. That's why the prayer he offered : "Don't make me forget Mother. Let not your world-bewitching Maya enchant me."

M. (To the Doctor)—A *daridra-narayana* (God in the form of a poor man) is lying ill—a teacher of this school, Hemant Babu. He has a wife and children, earns very little. Let us go and see him once.

The Doctor sets off in this rain. M asks Vinay and Amulya the Younger to accompany him and sends him some sago, sugar-candy, honey and other medical diet

through them. Himself standing in the verandah, he watches them wading through knee-deep water.

28th July 1923.

6

M. is seated in the room on the 1st floor of Morton School. After the evening dhyana he is recalling the days of his stay at Mihijam (See part I). All around are bhaktas.

M. (To the bhaktas)—What a beautiful solitary spot ! How extensive the plains ! The house of Yatin Babu, Paresh Babu, Vinay Babu, Barrister Babu, Pulin Babu, and our bards, the Santhal boys—all these places, personalities !

A Bhakta—Yes sir.

M.—They are all our friends and neighbours. And in those quiet nights with the sky studded with stars ! What, wasn't it so ?

Bhakta—Yes sir. And the open air, the mango-grove, the bees !

M.—How busy the bees drinking honey ! Sitting on the flower, no humming. And then the visit to Keorjali—Nitai Kaviraj Mahashay, the fair of Ramanavami ! Rama, Krishna, Shiva, Durga, so many idols ! Within the *mandap* (temporary shaded structure for puja) Thakur's picture is also there.

The Sankirtana goes on—

Hare Krishna, hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, hare hare !

Hare Ram, hare Ram, Ram Ram, hare hare !

And how the drummers were giving the beat ! On the way back, seeing the high-banked pond, that kindling

of the memory of Jayrambati ! That recalling of the poetry of Kalidasa at the sight of the moon on the vast expanse ! The Kalia hills and marriages of the Santhals !

The Bhakta—And also children's greeting, 'Salam Babaji' !

M. (Joyfully)—Aren't they simple ? They know nothing about urban manners. Children of nature ! O, how the mind longs to run to that place ! But that the body cannot stand. What else is in store, who knows ?

M. (To all)—It is in solitude that the mind expands. Living here continuously the mind becomes limited, like the feet of the Chinese. They are shod in their very childhood, and they cannot grow in size. They remain the same size as before. Here it is the same with the mind. Living here is like a fish in a pot, and going into solitude, a fish of the lake—independent, free. The world, a fencing—it does not let the mind expand. That's why yogis retire into solitude. There they become one with Him. The yogis can hear the *anahat* sound in solitude, not with these ears. New ears develop. The sound OM is always there : "I am, I am." It cannot be heard in human habitations, only in solitude. Living in solitude brings an end to attributes. I am the son of so and so, the father of so and so, so and so of so and so—these are attributes. Then he recognizes his own self. Recognizing the self, he becomes one with Him. The canal also becomes the river. There is flood here as well as there. It is the same water. By recognising the self through the path of bhakti, one becomes conscious how great one is. I am His son. Who is He ?—God. Is it a small matter ? Recognizing Him through the path of jnana, that too is great. There is no difference between me and Him. I am he—*सोऽहम्*. All this priceless treasure is the wealth of solitude. With calculating intellect, this wealth cannot be gained. Everything of this side is possible—money, learning, name, but God-realiza-

tion is not. If you desire this, go into solitude—the higher intellect will be achieved.

M. (To Suren)—Hearing different people say different things, Thakur used to tell them all to Mother. He would say, "Mother Shivanath says, Do this. The Englishman says, Do what is reasonable. And each holy book has its own doctrine. Whom shall I listen to ? I shall listen to nobody. I shall only listen to what you say." 'What you say', that is revelation (the Veda), the word of God. That's why the Veda is eternal, super-human.

M. (To Viranchi)—We read the Kathamrita in the evening. It describes the four stages of bhaktas. The *pravartaka* (the beginner): he has just begun taking the name of God. On having undergone tapasya for some time when he tries to realize Him, he is called a *sadhaka*. When he has realized Him he is a *siddha* (the perfected one). At this stage he becomes a *Jivan-Mukta*. He is always aware of Him in his awareness. The real and the unreal become distinct. Above them is the *siddha-o-siddha*, the perfect. Then one talks to Him—sees, touches, speaks with Him.

M. begins to sing—

—O Mother Shyama, the Embodiment of the waves of nectar ! One doesn't know Thy play of moods.

—Thou art the beloved of my soul, the source of joy of my life. Beautiful Thy name, O the Refuge of the lowly !

—O the King of kings, show Thyself to me.

Amrit (To M)—It is 9.30 p.m. already.

M. (Replying in song)—

This time I have given my full thought.  
I have learnt bhava from one well-versed in it.

O Mother, I have found a man from the country which has no night.

I do not know what is night and what is day.

I have rendered all ritualistic devotions barren.

This also is a state. Finding a man from the country which has no night, that is, to attain samadhi. This is man's normal state.

29-30 July 1923.

7

M. is seated in the room on the first floor. Parvati Mitra, the disciple of Nag Mahashay has sent his eldest son, Durga to see M. In his hand, there is a copy of the life of Nag Mahashay written by his mother and brought as a present. A bhakta read out the contents. M asked Durga to read out the chapter: 'Meeting with Thakur.' But because of some interruption, it could not be read. When Durga had left, Amulya the Younger read it out.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Nag Mahashay went to the bazar. He paid to the shopkeeper what he demanded. Somebody said, "I say, he is a sadhu. Why did you charge him so much?" So the Shopkeeper went to return some money. He (Nag Mahashay) said, "No, it will mean your loss. Keep it."

Amulya the Elder—But didn't Thakur say: When you go to the bazar, you will compare at five shops.

M. Was it for everybody? Those who are worldly cannot but compare at five shops; not for those who have 'reached the roof.' They are men from 'the country which has no night.' He who can be deceived here, how can he see God? That's why one should make purchases carefully. The practice of not allowing oneself to be deceived is more valuable than that of saving money.

This vigilant habit should be turned towards God. That's why he said, "He who can keep account of salt can also keep account of sugar-candy." But this rule is not for those who have reached the roof, seen God.

M. (To Jiten the Elder)—A porter comes from the market. His whole body is drenched in perspiration and lo ! instantly he (Nag Mahashay) begins to fan him. Then he brings all the sweet-meats from the house and gives him to eat. No sense of distinction. The worldly people will think that he showed pity to a coolie. But this is not pity—it is worship. Pity leads to the pride of greatness. He who sees God in all creation, all his actions are worship. Pity brings credit for having obliged others ; by worship one obliges the self. That's why a Hindu's life is a continuous worship.

M. (To a student)—In the first human birth, people remain busy in worldly enjoyments. Those who have had many births have done away with them. They are not interested in anything but being always merged in meditation on God. It is also heard that there are some who fast unto death for Him. When an avatara comes, everything is fresh, it becomes so easy. Those who are born now have a golden chance. I hear some of them have resolved not to marry at all. What slights from the wife ! What tortures ! Why fall into these troubles ?

M. (To Viranchi)—A pleader of this locality has a second wife. The wife always quarrels with her mother-in-law. The pleader tells the mother, "Why did you arrange my marriage ? Didn't I say no, then ?" The mother has no reply. He who arranges has to bear the burden. Marrying away a dependent child is also a troublesome affair.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Casting a glance over this world, it is seen that all is a meeting between the Purusha and the Prakriti, Shiva and Shakti. The creepers and trees,

animals and birds, all living creatures, everywhere it is there. The Shiva-lingam, you will see, is always placed on the Brahman-yoni. There too it is the intercourse between Shiva and Shakti. Meditating night and day on this alone one succeeds—'Purusha-Prakriti, Purusha-Prakriti; Shiva-Shakti, Shiva-Shakti'. Just by meditating on it, one will realize God. Nothing else will be needed. He created this Purusha and Prakriti. This is to maintain His organisation.

Amrit—Had there not been women, it would have been better.

M. (Laughing profoundly)—So I see, you have come to this conclusion after deep thinking. For the safety of His grand organisation, (the world), Shiva and Shakti meet. It is He who creates and it is He who destroys. The reason for destroying, what we understand (laughing) roughly: Had it not been so where will they be accommodated; where would so many living-beings live, if they were not to die? Therefore, epidemics and pestilences. Were all to live where would be any living space? There is another reason too. It is heard, the rishis say that all these creatures also go to other worlds.

M. (To the bhaktas)—That's why one should not do anything rashly. Were you to peel off the mango while it is quite unripe there would be no mango. But when there is the kernel and the seed and it is ripe then no harm in peeling. One should do nothing in an unprepared state. The best is to go the natural way. Renunciation and all, He makes one do when the time comes. Let the inside be ripe, one may renounce—no harm will come. Forcing it before time, that is harmful. But one must go on trying, together with prayer and holy company.

Calcutta, 31st July 1923  
15th of Shrawana, 1330 (Bengali year)  
Tuesday

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### ALEXANDER, NAPOLEON AND CHRIST

#### 1

The office-room of the Morton School. M is seated on a chair, close to him is a devotee-teacher. It is 9.45. There is nobody else in the room. Yesterday was the Nag-Panchami day. On this date was born M. The bhaktas celebrated it in the house of the Doctor in Kashi-pore. M asked, "Who has spent on yesterday's festivities? Was it Doctor Babu? And who were the workers?" Before the bhakta had replied, other teachers came in. M asked the bhakta to take a chair very close to him, and began to talk in a soft voice.

M. (To the teacher)—Thakur used to say: The ritualistic path is very difficult—it throws one in difficulties. The mind remains engaged in them day and night. That's why he dissuaded from taking this path. Some people do like this—they give money in the Math or buy offerings and give them there. What a useful purpose is served thereby! At first they are offered to Thakur and then all the sadhus share the prasada. If the bhaktas take it along with them it is still better. Many people do like this on Thakur's birth-day celebrations, I have seen. In this way, there is no botheration to oneself. They themselves do everything and then some of you may also go and assist them. Somebody may go and bring prasada for the bhaktas. Bhaktas, that is, those who live in the house. Thus they can cope with all this work. They have many men and an organisation. But for those who do not have these facilities it is very difficult indeed. They have them-

selves to do all. Just take Doctor Babu. He has worked hard the whole day. First of all a body (showing a finger) like this, on the top of it, so much of work. Having offered it to Thakur, the sadhus take prasada, how nice it is! What do you say? Offer money in the Math, for the service of Thakur, that's all. It is being done everyday; let it be a little more to-day. And what is the need of mentioning the purpose of the offering and all that? If it is used in the service of Thakur or sadhus, the object is achieved."

Now it is half past three. Handing out a big bottle of high grade cow's ghee to a bhakta-teacher, M says, "Hemant Babu is not well. please deliver this to him." This ghee was the gift of Shukalal to M. He says again as the bhakta is about to leave, "God-in-the-poor is served in the Math. Please deliver it to the same God-in-the-poor." Previously too, he had sent dal, rice, sago, sugar-candy and such other things, one day. Hemant is a teacher of the Morton school.

At half past five, M is repairing with his own hands a crack in the roof on the 3rd floor with cement. Seeing ants coming out of the crack in the roof M says to a bhakta, "No, we shall not apply it here. If we do so the ants will not be able to come out." Is it seeing God in every created thing?

It is evening now. The daily-visiting bhaktas are all there. There are some new bhaktas too—Doctor's uncle, Lalit the musician and Nayab have also come. Meditation over, one of the new bhaktas asks—

The new bhakta (To M)—Sir, what are the signs that one is attaining belief in God?

M.—The company of sadhus. Such a man will seek the company of sadhus. This is the beginning of the religious life. Jesus said to a rich man, "If you want my

company you will have to give up all"—'Give (your all) to the poor...and follow me'. But he could not do so. He who sincerely seeks the company of sadhus, it is to be understood, has taken God as the Essence. A man is known by the company he keeps and the ideal he worships. If the ideal of a person is some congressman, it is to be understood, that there was patriotism in him, that he likes politics. If a person keeps the company of Vidya Sagar Mahashay, you will know that a little of philanthropy is in him, he has compassion. And if a person comes to a sadhu, you are to understand that he is not interested in any of these. He has understood that God is real and the world is transitory. That is why he pines for the Eternal Life, and how to attain it.

The New Bhakta—What is the difference between the *markat* renunciation and the real one ?

M.—In the *markat* type of renunciation—say, having been burnt by the fire of the world and adopting the gerua, one goes to live in Kashi. After two months, he wires home, "I have succeeded in finding a job. I am returning home soon." He had no work, so he renounced. In the real renunciation, the world looks like a death-well, and the kith and kin like venomous serpents. Thakur used to say this. A person, having lived at Kashi for eight years, threw away the gerua and returned home. Food was served late so he was angry with his wife and had renunciation. Such a renunciation cannot stand the test. But when one loves God sincerely, one feels a distaste for the world.

The Second Bhakta—Sir, why do people tell a lie unnecessarily ?

M.—We shall talk about it some other day.

By this time, Shukalal, Doctor, Vinay, Manoranjana and Jiten the Elder have arrived. Also Amulya the Younger, Viren, Sudhir, Suren Ganguli, Gadai and others.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Such is also heard as with Nag Mahashay. Having married he has a young wife at home but he would not accept her. They live in the same house but he does not take her. Such things happen with perfected men, great men. He married for the first time—the wife was sixteen, and he did not live with her. A second time he would not marry. The mother is dead ; the father is keen on the marriage of the son. On coming to know of this he says to the father that he will marry. He marries, but the same as before—there is no physical relationship. Except for the great, who can get rid of the temptation in this way ? That is why Jesus said : Who are married let them live as if they were not married. There is the wife in the house but they don't accept her—what a strength of mind !

M. (To Viren)—A rishi came to Dashratha. He said, "Sire, you have no doubt conquered many kingdoms but there is one which still remains." Dashratha said, "Which is that ?" The rishis replied, "Have you conquered lust?" Dashratha replied, "No." The rishis said, "If that remains, what is your achievement ? Of what avail your conquering so many kingdoms ?" He who has subdued lust is a real conqueror.

M. (To Mohan)—Napoleon said the same in St. Helena during his last days : "Caesar, Alexander and I, what have we achieved ? These conquests lasted but two days, but the conquest of Jesus will last for ever. Our kingdom breaks even while we are living, but his (Christ's) kingdom begins at his death, and extends for ever. Behold the destiny of him who has been called the great Napoleon ? What an abyss between my deep misery and eternal religion of Christ?" And he also said : "There exists an Infinite Being. Compared with Him, I Napoleon, with all my genius am truly nothing, a pure nothing."

M. (To the bhaktas)—Christ had fully conquered lust,

dents, "Look here, now I am myself going to apply plaster of lime and brick-dust to the roof on the 3rd floor, where there is a leakage." On hearing this, some boys gaze in wonder at M. Some say in spite of themselves, "What, you yourself. Mr. Rector?" M says, "Yes, my dear boys, I myself." Some again begin to laugh. The school is over. M is himself repairing the roof of the 3rd floor. A bhakta is helping him. M says to the bhakta, "The boys began laughing on hearing that I would do the work myself. But this they will remember now all their life. If one does not do one's own work, who else will?"

In the afternoon, he sent a bhakta to the Vedanta Society of Swami Abhedananda. The Vedanta Society has recently been started in the Central Avenue but today there has been no lecture. At the return of the bhakta he says, Vedanta, that is revelation. God speaks through so many mouths. Does he only speak through the mouth of the avatars? A dog entered the Panchavati. What did Thakur say, "Let me go. Perhaps Ma will say something through the mouth of this dog."

3rd August 1923.

2

Today, from 7 to 8.30 in the morning, M was in the Satprasang Sabha. It was the Sunday assembly of the students and teachers of the Morton School, started by M. It starts with a prayer followed by the opening song. Then reading from the Gita and the Bhagavata. Thereafter religious discussion—generally it is a discussion on the life story of some great man. The subject of discussion is decided upon before hand. When the meeting is over M sends Antevasti to the Dakshineshwar. He returns in the evening at 7 o'clock. M asks him all about the Dakshineshwar—the Panchavati, the Bel-tree spot, the Shrine of Thakur, the Hanspukur (Pond of Swans), Nahabat (the Drum-room), the Bakul spot, Mother Kali, Radha Kant,

the twelve temples of Siva, the courtyard (Chandni) and the ghat under the Bakul, the Nat-mandir and so on—about all these he makes enquiries as devotedly as one does about a most respected living-being. Today, it is Sunday. How many persons visited it? How many boats were anchored at the ghat—all these he asked. It appeared as if he was enquiring about his Master, Bhagavana Sri Ramakrishna—with the same reverence and lively thoughts. Having heard all M says, “A good day’s work. At that place, Thakur lived for full thirty years. The whole atmosphere of the place, is surcharged with spirituality.”

M is seated in the room to the left of the staircase of the first floor. The dhyana and worship of the evening are over. On the floor of the room are seated the bhaktas. Both Jitens, Doctor, Vinay, and Amulya the Younger have arrived too. Durgapada of the Healing-Balm fame has also come after many days. Shachi, Amrit, Viren, Gadai, Manoranjana and Nalini the Younger are also there, besides some others.

M. (To Mohan)—What was talked about in the Vedanta Samiti?

Mohan—Abhedananda Maharaj said, “The soul is not subject to pleasure or pain, nor to gain or loss. Religion has two parts: One the essential, the other the non-essential. And he said, “To unite the partial consciousness of the jiva with the universal consciousness, this is the problem of life.”

M.—But Thakur used to say, tapasya is needed. One may read a thousand books, one may do anything, till one takes to tapasya in solitude, one can understand nothing. The people of India are blessed for having been born here. For them, mere learning does not serve any purpose. That is for that country (the West). For this country the maxim is ‘perform tapasya.’ Keshab Sen used to deliver beautiful speeches. I was then at school in

anger and the rest. Only after this one attains eternal joy and peace. That's why his gospel is true for all times to come. There is no end to his spiritual kingdom. What does a worldly man live with ? His environments are a different type. He has adapted himself to them. That's why he says, "I am all right." The avatara comes only to break this inertia. It is only when he comes and infuses strength that this inertia breaks up. The source of strength is the avatara. But even so, do people wake up ? He came just a short while ago. How many people are waking up ? That's why Chaitanya Deva said to his Mother, "You ask me to stay at home, that I shall do. But the body cannot survive in this fire." The mother heard this and said, "Go where you can preserve your body." So he embraced sannyasa. "The world, a burning fire," said Thakur. Thakur also said crying to the Mother of the Universe : Mother, I am burning in the fire of 'Woman and gold'. The body will not last.

M. (To the Doctor)—How easy these days ! How near is the Math ! And then Thakur has provided steamers. What good men there are in the Math ! So many of them are B.A.'s and M.A.'s. How to realize God, this is what they pine for. They do whatever they are asked, now they meditate, now they are shopping. And then, when there are floods they go to render help. They are anxious like those 'realized' mothers. Those *realised* mothers do not ordinarily believe in gods and goddesses. They say, "I kick their gods and goddesses." They may not physically kick but at least they say so. But no sooner does the son fall ill, and the doctor, the vaidya feels helpless, than the old women of the neighbourhood suggest to take a vow in the Taraknath Temple." What else can she do ? At last, she takes a vow, now that she is anxious for the son. So are the sadhus of the Math for God. Are the sadhus of the Math only equipped with learning ? They have unbroken brahmacharya.

That is why their knowledge is so great. Whatever they read or hear sticks in their mind—they observe brahmacharya, you see. They have encyclopaedic knowledge. Thakur used to say, "Pour as much water in the pot with a hole as you like, it will not stay there." Similarly, if there is no brahmacharya, nothing is retained. Having read a few pages, one may pass an examination but soon every thing is forgotten. Reason?—There is no brahmacharya. Chaitanya Deva is sitting with bhaktas in Puri. Some person asks: "Why is it that spiritual matters do not stay in the mind of the worldly people?" Chaitanya Deva replies, "Because they have contact with woman." Thakur also used to say the same.

Now Lalit sings three songs at the behest of M. He has a very sweet voice and has not married. Lastly he sings,

—Will such a day come, O Mother Tara !

When two streams of tears will flow down from both eyes as I repeat : Tara, Tara !

The lotus of the heart will open and the darkness of the mind dispelled.

I shall roll on the ground and shouting 'Tara', become perfect ?

The song is over. Everybody is charmed. Is it therefore that M is making him the best of gifts ? M says, "Do you understand, Lalit Babu ? Seeing all this in the world, some of us do not want to take a wife at all. Why should they go to die entangled in these complications ?"

It is 9.30 in the evening.

August 2, 1963.

Class six in the verandah of the second floor of the Morton School. Entering this class, M says to the stu-

## 3

M is talking to the bhaktas in the room on the first floor. The evening is past now. With a plan in his hand, a bhakta enters the room. It is the plan of a house. They discuss adopting it for the Morton School. The bhakta had prepared the plan at his desire. M says—

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur used to say, “Ma had kept me in such a state that unless five (persons) had offered me worship I felt uneasy. He used to see Ma within himself, isn’t it ? That’s why such was his condition. And he used to say, “And sometimes she kept (me) in such a state that I might start cleaning privies.”

M. (To Jiten the Elder)—Ma had kept Nag Mahashay as an example of an ideal householder. Those who are kept for teaching man do not engage themselves in multifarious activities, sometimes picking up this, sometimes giving up that. One gets crystallised in one thing. Nag Mahashay has shown by his life what is service. Guests have arrived. He looks upon them as God personified. He would feed them and refresh them with a smoke, arrange for their rest and then take meals himself. He looked at all living-beings with an equal eye. He would see God in all, so he worshipped all. This is not compassion. Charity, compassion, service—each greater in succession. In compassion, one has the pride that one is great. Service destroys it. He would always see God and serve Him. He would humble himself before Him. That is why those who serve are the greatest of all. The Chandi says the same. Those who are small before the Lord are the refuge of the world, the best of all—  
त्वामाश्रितां आश्रयतां प्रयान्ति । How one can attain perfect sannyasa while living in household is illustrated by Nag Mahashay. Were they small men ? Thakur coming as an avatara—those with him were but his own parts. Nag Mahashay

got crystallised through service. You see God comes sometimes to carry out an inspection, together with his intimate ones. We then call Him an avatara.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Chaitanya Deva, having embraced sannyasa himself took his abode in Puri. He sent away Nitai so that he may marry and live as a householder. What a renunciation ! A sannyasi since childhood he became a householder. The reason ?—For the teaching of householders ; to demonstrate how to call on God while living in the household. Nityananda became a householder. Thakur used to call the household 'the house of lamp-black. When one lives here, one becomes a bit different.' There is a world of difference between the free life of a sannyasi and the life of a house-holder. Once Nitai went to Puri but he did not call on Chaitanya Deva—he was feeling ashamed. All the bhaktas met him. Not seeing Nitai he said, "Where is my Nitai ?" The bhaktas said, 'He is on the bank of the Narendra Sarovar.' He immediately ran to meet him himself and said to everybody, "He who takes the Charanamrita of Nitai will realize God." Why this honour ? Such a great renunciation for the good of the world ! He had given up sannyasa at the bidding of the Lord. He humbled himself before him, but became great before the world. Nitai is the refuge of the bhaktas.

Jiten the Elder—Has this way of showing honour any other significance ?

M.—Why not ? The Lord cannot forsake anybody. He equally loves all. Even if we are oblivious of Him, He looks after us just the same. That is how the worldly people will muster courage. This being so they will not completely drown themselves into worldliness. They will feel, the Lord does not forsake us even when we forget him—just as he did not forsake Nitai. That's why Christ said : 'for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good', (St. Matthew 5:45).

class II.\* I could not understand English well. Even so, when the lecture was to be delivered in the evening, I would go and take my seat at three in the after-noon. What a flow of English! On his way back everybody would talk about it : "We have not understood a word but how well he spoke !" (Everybody laughs.) The speech was all dry stuff. O Ma ! when later on I went to Thakur, I saw that every word of his was steeped in syrup. A refreshed feeling would descend on every nerve.

M. (To the bhaktas)—The study of the scriptures has its own dangers. Thakur used to say : The holy books have sugar mixed with sand. Who is going to sift sugar for you ? If you take it whole, it will result in disease. The avataras come to interpret the Shastras. Study by comparing them with what he says. Accept what tallies and leave out what doesn't. But those who have to teach man had better know a little of everything. All this would serve as a shield and sword, to be used for 'killing' others. For oneself even one great saying of Thakur is sufficient.

M. (To Durgapada)—The unripe mind is beset with many dangers. Taking to unselfish work, one meets with a number of obstacles. The path of action is difficult. I hear that many persons in the Math crave for the moment when they will find leisure to call on Him. So busy they are. Many a time, he who goes to arrange a marriage ends up by marrying himself. Arranging somebody's marriage, that is, doing good to others. In doing this one gets bound. How great the danger in an unripe mind ! That's why I see that those in the Math, the moment they get some leisure, free themselves and escape. One person has gone towards Dehradun to call on Him in solitude.

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\*Class IX of those days.

'By going into solitude, said Thakur, one's constitution remains healthy, and he also said, 'His grace dawning, the Veda, the Vedanta are automatically understood. Ma has shown them all to me.' If there is no facility at all one should call on Him, remaining in the state in which he finds himself. A person is working in a office. He thinks that his job is to keep the family members satisfied and that on their being satisfied he would get the time to call on Him with his whole heart—doing with this idea is also Karma-Yoga. The aim should be God-realization. As soon as one gets an opportunity one should go into solitude and call on Him. If there is work in one's nature will one like to go ? The guru wants that you attain Him by that path. How very eligible was Arjuna ! Even he had to perform work. He was given the clue : Act for Me. In this way, you will not be bound. But tapasya is needed and retiring to a solitary place in between."

All the bhaktas bade good-bye. Only the Doctor, Viren and some others are left behind. It is 9.30 p.m. Standing in the verandah, M says to the Doctor, "While living in the household, one should consider the pet animals as one's own children. The horse has died tragically. Thereby the sin is attached to his master. Is householder's life so easy ? How can one afford to be unsystematic ? One had better give up the household life."

Viren—Are we fit for a worldly life ?

M.—You are right. 'When you have become an expert, you may live the worldly life', used to say Thakur. He saw a circus show, in the Calcutta Maidan, seated with the bhaktas on an eight-anna seat. On coming out he said : Just see. The lady was able to stand on one leg on a running horse only after so much of practice. If one is such an expert one may live in the world. Without it one will be shattered into pieces.

5th August 1923.

accepted the disease. Ma has limitless forms. In the garb of the naked man it was she who had taught him the Vedanta. Those who are to be world teachers have to possess varied knowledge. Isn't that so. That's why Ma told him a little. On hearing, on seeing, he said. "Oh, that's this."

M. (To the bhaktas)—On his return from that country (the West) Vivekananda was one day walking on the roof of Balaram Babu's house when we had a dialogue. He said, "Yours is not the path of Vedanta." I have not been able to understand his meaning till now. He had hinted, let it be. "With a little study or tapasya," some say, "We have understood *so-ham* (सोऽहम्) 'I am that.'" Is it so easy? Those who are in the world have even greater difficulty in understanding it. In adaptation to the world, one lives in oblivion. A drunkard is lying in a ditch. The watchman calls out to him, "Get up." The drunkard replies, "I am all right here, friend. Why do you trouble me in my comfort by shouting?" This is the state of the worldly people. They are drunk with lust and gold. If you force them to rise they feel a great trouble, like extracting a tooth prematurely. Even so, there is a way. The guru willing, all is possible. By his grace, even a string with a thousand knots can be loosened. Grace of the guru! Satchidananda is the guru. He comes down as avatara. But for him there is no guru., Guru's grace, Guru's grace! Faith in the word of the guru.

"When the grace of the guru dawns, the veils are lifted one by one, and seeing the inner mystery one stands wonderstruck. Living constantly within 'woman and gold' such a hard twist the mind receives that it cannot easily be untwisted. These hostile *sanskaras* can only be changed by the guru. If the guru is kind, the disciple becomes a champion. It is to develop faith in the word of the guru that tapasya is needed. After tapasya, one begins to understand a little. These are not the subjects for intellectual understanding."

M. (To Mohan)—He looks to everything. We don't have to bother too much. We are in His hands. He is not in our hands. Try to act on what He says. The rest will be done by Him. Many have such good sanskaras that they recognize the avatara in Thakur in no time. On the other hand, many cannot do so. Why so with the former? They had performed a lot of tapasya in their previous births, you see. When the faith in guru's word is lacking 'but' comes in. They had tapasya, so they recognized him and he (Thakur) also loved them. Nothing more has to be done after faith on the word of the guru. Otherwise, the work increases. After the Battle of Kurukshetra, Yudhishtra said, "All this slaying of the relations is due to me." Sri Krishna said, "Nothing of the sort." Yudhishtra could not get over his 'But'. That is why the Rajsuya Yajna. It increased his work. You may read a thousand books and perform any amount of tapasya, but for the grace of the guru nothing will avail. One should therefore pray: "At your mercy, Lord, at your mercy. And in between one should take the vow to offer sugar and green cocoanut to Ma."

Doctor—If that be so why does the guru ask to perform tapasya?

M.—Who but the guru performs the tapasya? It is the guru who does it through his disciple. This is also lila. Having received instruction from the guru, the performance of tapasya leads to faith in him. No sooner one has faith in his word the goal is reached. Work is minimised to a great extent. He Himself does all then. And performing tapasya without the instructions from the guru means: I shall have such a room. Sitting in it the *purushcharana* would be arranged. A number of persons will see it and say, Aha! He is a big sadhu.... On being initiated the guru tells you that He should be called upon very secretly in solitude. Let nobody else know it. By performing tapasya secretly in solitude one

M. (To the bhaktas)—Sri Ramachandra is seated in his royal court. Narada comes in. Rama and Sita quickly descend from the throne and prostrate themselves before him. Having adored him they speak thus : "O Master, you are the world-teacher sannyasi. You give darshana to householders for teaching them." Narada replied, "Rama, You can't hide anything from me. I know who you are. You are Brahman Absolute, Brahman the Saviour. You have come now in a human body—to destroy Ravana." Rama began to smile. Why did Mahaprabhu show that respect to Nitai and why did Rama also prostrate himself before Narada ? The reason : since they did so, others will do it too. When others do it they will be redeemed. 'Himself following the path of dharma, He teaches humanity'. This is why it is proper for us to act on what he says and does. He thinks more for us—we are in His hands.

Ramani begins to sing,

—O the easily pleased One, O Shiva Shanker, O Bhola !  
With the half-moon in thy crest, the skull as Thy ear-  
ring, poison in the throat, the king of snakes swinging  
over Thee !

The ash your ornament, the best bull Thy mount, the  
hide of the tiger round Thy waist and playing on the  
*damru* !

Ba-ba-bum, Ba-ba-bum is swelling forth incessantly, and  
the Ganga flowing kal-kal, khal-khal.

Calcutta, August 6, 1923  
21st Shravana, 1330 (Bengali year)  
Monday, Shukla Dashami

## MATH, THE HOSPITAL FOR THE IGNORANT

The same room on the first floor of Morton School. Evening past, Shukalal reads from the *Kathamrita*, Volume III part 29 and Volume IV part 24, at the bidding of M. The reading over, M says, "Let us meditate for a while on what has been read. We had better talk on other matters thereafter, Meditation means perfect detachment of the mind from the environments, to take the mind off that within which it is born and brought up." Saying this, M began to meditate. The bhaktas also began to do so. Thereafter, the talk on God started.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur is saying, "Who I am and who you are, knowing this will do. Nothing more will be needed. In other words, he is God and has come down as avatara—by knowing it, the bhaktas will become his part, his apostles. This fact having been understood, they will no longer have to enter Maya. Thakur said (pointing towards his body): "In this (body) there are two—one the bhakta, the other Ma. It is the bhakta who is suffering from cancer. Two birds, one is the witness and the other the subject of pleasure and pain. He said to the naked man (Totapuri), "Till you know this, it will not be possible for you to go."

Jiten the Elder—What remained there for him to know ?

M.—Everything had to be done for teaching humanity. Let the people think that this body is transitory, then they will call on Him in pleasure and pain. So he

time, he finds that with his ailing body, M enters the Samaj building accompanied by some bhaktas. The spiritual discourses make M forget his illness.

It is the 20th of August today. M is not feeling well. A sannyasi has arrived from the Belur Math. He has just returned after visiting almost all the holy places of India. M listens with rapt attention about the different places of pilgrimage, sadhus and bhaktas. The sadhu has visited Bhuvaneshwar, Puri, Madras, Kanchi, Pakshi Tirtha, Chidambaram, Srirangam, Balaji, Meenakshi, Rameshwaram and Kanyakumari. Besides he has visited Nasik, Panchavati, Punyapattan, Dwarka and Prabhas and then seen Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedar, Badri, Rishikesh, Haridwar in the Himalayas, Vrindaban, Mathura, Prayag, Kashi—all these holy places. He has brought prasada and sacred flowers from several places.

The dry *vilva* leaf and *tulasi patra* are like precious jewels and sandal wood, kum-kum, prasada of sweets as if priceless wealth. Getting such precious treasure, M has today forgotten the world. Like a child he is full of joy and fun. The naturally serious M is today talkative. With deep earnestness he repeats the name of each one of the holy places ten times over. He says to the bhaktas, "Just see, Thakur has sent this mahaprasada. See it, touch it and eat it. See, this is the Mahaprasada of Jagannath and this of Rameshwaram, this of Kanyakumari—this is Mother's prasada, this of Dwarkanath. Again this is the Mahaprasada of Kedarnath and Badrinarayan in the Himalayas, and this *nakuldana* of Vishwanath."

By this time many bhaktas have arrived—Doctor, Shukalal, both the Jitens, Amrit and Yogen, also Vinay, Jagabandhu, Nalini the Younger, Ramesh, Nayab and others. A person has come from Katihar also; just today he has got initiation from Swami Sardananda. Another per-

son has come with a sannyasi. At the insistence of M, the sannyasi sang two songs, one about Thakur, the other with the meaning : "Come O' Hari, take your seat in my heart ; let me wash your red-hued feet with the tears of my eyes." The sadhu is a musician. After listening to the song, M says "Thakur used to say : He can be invoked by songs too."

Companion bhakta—The Kathamrita says that you said to Thakur : "Will there be any more song today ?"

M. (Laughing loudly)—Yes, one could not say to him, "Let there be a song." So I put it that way. After thinking over it for a while Thakur said, "No, there will be no more. I shall go to Balaram Babu's at Calcutta. There will be music there. Please go there." Immediately after he asked, "Just tell me what did I say ?" I said, "Balaram Babu's house, Bosepara, Bag Bazar, I shall go there. Going there, listen to music." Then he said, "Yes, go there".

M. (To all)—Sadhus, bhaktas, avataras—they revive places of pilgrimage. Shankar revived Kedar and Badri, Chaitanya Deva Vrindaban. He would stand in the rice fields and cry. For, reminded he was of his previous (incarnation of Krishna) story, you see. And from a higher plane he said, "This is the Radhakund". Thereafter that place was dug and it is the Radhakund of today. In a song, the boy from Braj goes to his mother and says, "Mother, I have just seen a new sannyasi, fair of complexion. He cries like our Kanahai holding the branch of a tree." He discovered an extinct tirtha. Besides they establish new places of pilgrimage.

M. (To a sadhu)—Thakur would say : The heart of the bhakta is the living-room of the Lord. Everybody cannot enter the interior but everybody can enter the living-room. Everybody cannot recognize an avatara, but they can know

can) know one's true nature. The 'I' can be known. All attributes are removed—I the father of so and so, son of so and so, all these.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Who can understand *so-ham* (सेहम्), "I am that"?—Those whose heart is burning, living in the midst of woman and gold. Does this happen to anybody, is there any such? Repeating So-ham, so-ham only, is it enough? One cannot even repeat it without tapasya. There is no way to understand it. Only intellectual acceptance will not do.

"When a bhakta mentioned tapasya, Thakur said, 'Amrit narrates it very nicely. A person has lit a fire after the whole botheration of collecting fire-wood and straw. Now tell me can many others not warm themselves at that fire?' In other words, he has lit the fire. Those who put their faith in him will not have to do anything. They will get the benefit of guru's tapasya. The disciple had the desire to perform tapasya. How beautifully Thakur replies referring to the name of Amrit. He made the two sides meet."

Jagabandhu—To whom did he say it?

M.—To a bhakta. Many do not want to publicize their names, isn't it? They do not like many to know.

M. (To Vinay)—What is the news from the Math? Please say.

Vinay (in a very soft voice)—Sir, I did not go today.

M. (Not being able to hear)—Louder please. (All laugh).

Jiten the Elder—An advocate was speaking in a low voice, almost in a whisper in the High Court. We said, "Please speak louder."

M.—No, they will not do so, for they belong to the Math. To compare these with them ! They have the strength of ten thousand elephants. (Excitedly) What do you say, man ? To compare those worldly people with them ! They themselves are their own ideal. For shame ! In the Math, there are so many men of great qualities. So many examinations they have passed. What a determination they have ! How earnest they are ! And why not—how much have they renounced here !

A Bhakta—Could Thakur know in advance what type of bhaktas were about to come ?

M.—Yes, Ma would let him know it before hand what types of bhaktas were to come. On having the darshana of Gauranga, he would conclude that devotees of Gaur were coming. On seeing Kali, they are to be Shaktas and so on. But the intimate ones, Ma had shown each one much earlier. He had to wait for them for 22 or 23 years. It was then that the bhaktas of the inner circle all gathered there.

7th August 1923.

## 2

M is not keeping fit. For some days, he has been suffering from rheumatic pains in his left hand. Even so, there is no pause in his spiritual discourses. Besides, the Bhadrotsava is being celebrated in the Nava-Vidhan Brahma Samaj. Because of the holy association of Thakur with this Brahma Samaj, he has unbounded reverence for it. Even in his illness, he goes to witness the celebrations. The teachers of the Samaj fix a day for discussion on the meeting of Ramakrishna and Keshab Chandra Sen. It is Friday, the 17th of August. Having instructed Mohan how and what to discuss, M sends him to the Samaj. Mohan has been discussing with Acharya Nand Lal Sen, Pramath Nath Sen and others. At that

him as a sadhu, a spiritually perfected man, a paramahansa and a bhakta. He is God or an avatara—this is the interior. It is difficult to enter it. Until He permits one cannot go in. (To himself) Who is he, Dear One, whose story, whose thought makes the mind steady? The singing of whose one song makes one forget the world, brings the state of a yogi, who is he? (To the bhaktas) The state of a yogi is a state when the mind remains steady at His lotus-feet—योगश्चित्तवृत्तेनिरोधः। This is what is known as samadhi. The yogi is one who has control over the mind, the bhogi is one who is controlled by the mind.

M. (To the bhaktas)—How lucky we are today! Seated here at this one place He has made us visit so many holy places. One of his great sayings is: 'The body does nothing. The mind is all. He who visited a prostitute's house went to the Vaikunth (abode of Vishnu) and he who was listening to the Bhagavata went to hell!' He used to say this thing referring to the story of two friends. The body cannot always be at all places, let the mind be sent. That's all. I am old, I cannot go, so He sent him here. Hearing from him and meditating on it is almost the same as a visit. Even if not sixteen annas in a rupee, it is fourteen. For some it is even sixteen annas—for those who have a very powerful imagination. That is why I hear about the holy places, great men, ascetics and such others and look out for prasada everywhere. It is very lucky for us today, we have visited all the holy places sitting in this room."

20th August 1923.

Today is the Jhulan Ekadashi\* day. The bhaktas.

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\*The Festival of the Swinging of the cradle of Baby Krishna, beginning on the 11th day of the Bright Fortnight.

meet today in the first floor room, overlooking the road. All those of yesterday are present, the new comers are Shachi, Mani and Viranchi. It is 8 p.m. Having engaged Shachi in the reading of the Bhagavata, M goes to take his dinner. On returning, he finds that the topic is Dhruva-lok (The abode of Dhruva).

M. (To the bhaktas)—The Dhruva-lok reminds me of Mihijam. We used to watch the constellation, the Ursa Minor, sitting under the jambu-tree. The seven stars of the Ursa Minor revolve round the pole-star. They are here too but the facility to see them is not available here. Here, this place keeps the mind contracted (pointing with his finger towards the house) this compartment.

“There, that is in solitude, one can see great things. Brahman, that is, great. All this blazes forth while living in solitude. One feels then as if a fish from a pot has suddenly fallen into a sea. Here, living all the time, besieged by ‘woman and gold’, the mind gets contracted. Living in such an environment for long an adaptation comes about. One feels: I am all right. The mind becomes like the feet of the Chinese girls. From their childhood, their feet are shod in iron shoes. So they remain as small throughout the life. This is considered a mark of beauty, but nobody bothers how small they have become. The mind also becomes small while living in the world. Thakur left Mathur Babu’s mansions at two at night. What a distance between Jan Bazar and Dakshineswar. Mathur Babu said, “Father, how can I get the horses yoked at such an hour of the night? They are all asleep.” “I shall go on foot,” so saying he left. Mathur had no choice, so he arranged for a cab to send him. So long as he was bound by bhakti, he stayed there. Perhaps some mistake was made, so he left. He could no longer stay amidst ‘woman and gold’. So long as he stayed, it was only the attraction of bhakti.

M.—What a wonderful thing it is, the pole-star ! The seven stars of the constellation revolve round it. And why do they revolve, we used to see and wonder. (Pointing towards Mohan) He has also seen it. (To Mohan) Well, wasn't it ? (To the bhaktas) To day is Jhulan. There should be talk on Sri Krishna. Then the mind will be inspired with him. Saying this, he began to sing—

“The flute is sounding in the jungle. Will you come or not, tell me.

Shyama is standing on the path, I cannot but go.”

M.—It was ten or eleven o'clock at night. Thakur sang it sitting on his bed. Then he was not well. (To Nalini the Younger) let there be the reading of the Bhagavata, the five chapters on Rasa. It would be better to read the story of the gopis today—the Gopi Gita.

The Reader (reads)—The gopis say : O Friend, you are really not the begotton son of Yashoda. You are the inner soul of all living creatures of the world. To save the universe, you have been born in the Yadukul at the prayer of Brahma.

M.—The Indivisible Satchidananda who is beyond mind and speech has come to this world just like a man for the good of the world. In the very beginning, Nanda and Yashoda knew Sri Krishna only as their son. But now, by His Grace, they have been able to recognize him as God. That is why they are calling him as the inner soul. The gopis had also recognized him. So they are saying, “We are your unpaid maid-servants”. In other words, maids without salary, without wages. The first mantra of the Kathamrita is also the utterance of the gopis at that time—तवकथाभृतम् । The Lord disappeared from the circle of the *rasa*. The gopis became frantic at this separation. Thinking of him, they lost all body-consciousness—such a love was there The Cradle-swinging Festiva

of the Lord is going on. Let there be songs on this subject. He begins, to himself,

—I shall graze cows in the jungles of Vindaban.

O Keshab, wandering amidst the groves and glades,  
bestow Thy Grace on this distressed soul.

O Madhava, the Bewitcher of the mind, holding the  
magic flute,

—Say, Hari-bol, Hari bol, Hari bol, O my mind!—

Thou art the Eternal Youth of Braj, the Tamer of Kalya,  
the Dispeller of the fear of the distressed.

With eyes aslant, the peacock feather awry in the crest,  
the Charmer of Radha's heart,

The Lifter of the Govardhana, bedecked with sylvan flowers,  
O Damodar, the Destroyer of the pride of Kansa.

O Shyam, sporting and dancing with the gopis !

—Say, Hari-bol, Hai-bol, Hari bol, O my mind—.

21st August 1923

3

The Morton School. The western room on the 1st floor. It is about 8 p.m. M is seated on the ground facing the south. In front are seated on three sides Manoranjana, Nalini the Younger, Shachi, Viren, Yogen, Jiten the Younger, Doctor, Vinay and other bhaktas. Jagabandhu has returned from the lecture in the Vedanta Society. It has been raining the whole day.

Romesh the Younger reads from the Bhagavata. Overwhelmed by hunger, Krishna sent out the cowboys for begging cereals from the performers of Yajna. The Brahmins refused them. The wives of the performers of the yajna, on begging a second time brought four kinds of cereals to Sri Krishna and made him eat to his heart's

content. The wives of the Brahmins gained Brahman jnana by the grace of Krishna. Then the performers of the yajna began to repent.

M. (To the bhaktas)—That is why Thakur would himself ask for food on going to the houses of the devotees. He went to the house of Nand Bose. They did not know all this so he asked for food and ate it. He himself said, "One should be given something sweet to eat." The Lord eats the food of the devotee, himself asking in this way. It means that he is blessing them. The devotion of the wives of the performers of the yajna was without any desire for reward. That is why they brought food running as soon as they had the information. The performers of the yajna were 'bhaktas with a motive'. So they did not give away cereals till their yajna had ended. They did not know that the Lord of the yajna was Himself asking for food, appearing in a human-body. His own Mahamaya had veiled them. It was not their fault. Later on, they realized on seeing their wives and they started repenting. The women, on the other hand, had no high sanskaras. They realized God just by their selfless love. They are now God-like—the sincere bhakta and the Bhagawan are the same. That is why their husbands also got the awareness of Sri Krishna being God Himself by their grace. In Nand Bose's house, they are not able to recognize Thakur. They thought just a sadhu from the Dakshinেশ্বর had come. If a sadhu comes to a house-holder he should be served according to one's means, even this they did not know. So Thakur had to ask himself. This will teach them. Him—God Himself had come in the form of a man—how will they understand—unless they are made to. That is why Thakur used to say : The fundamental is the love of Satchidananda, loving him. The wives of the Brahmins realized God through this very love. They had embraced Sri Krishna in their minds. Their heart was lying in Sri Krishna, only with their bodies

they were performing the household work. That is why Thakur used to tell the story of two friends\*. The essence of it is that the mind is everything.

M. (To the Doctor)—It is very difficult to realize God while living in household. A man gets entangled in different attachments. Even so, if He wills, everything becomes possible. There is a story. A person went to look for a camel on the roof of the third floor (Everybody laughs). It means that if a camel can be found on the top of a four-storeyed house, God can also be realized while living in family. Since it is so difficult, Thakur used to say : Company of the holy every day, prayer with a pining heart and in between sejour in a solitary place—these are needed.

M. (To Vinay)—Well Vinay Babu, for how many days do you visit the Math ? On going to the Math one should share their work. On going there one should ask if one can render any service. Just to go, see Thakur and return immediately after pranams, is it much use ?

“A bhakta went to the Math to see sadhus. The latter were then busy with their work. “Well, let me go now”, saying so he returned. (Everybody laughs) Well Sudhir Babu, who returned home when the sadhus were bringing the almirahs down ? Their food of so much hardship ! One takes that but runs away at the time of rendering a little service ! Those who can serve them are blessed indeed. Those who sweep the courtyard of Thakur’s shrine or clean utensils are blessed. Who gets this privilege ? A sadhu from the Math has returned after going round all the holy places of India—the four dharmas.† He came here the other day. He said, “Where-

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\*The story of two friends, one of whom went to Bhagavata reading and the other to a prostitute’s house. The former went to hell, the later to the abode of Gods.

†Four main religious centres : Badri-Kedar, Jagannath Puri, Rameshwaram & Dwarka.

ever I went I was served royal food." I asked, was it due to his sannayasa.—No, such a high family he belonged to ! Such a great personage he was connected to ! He worships Thakur, you know, so he is the refuge of them all. That is why he received this worshipful treatment everywhere. God Himself has come down as an avatara. Those who meditate on Him rightly are worshipped everywhere.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur used to tell a story. A five year old child went to a house of worship to represent somebody in response to an invitation. The master of the house treated her so lovingly : She was served different kinds of sandesh in a silver plate. The master knows that she takes this sweet daily—then gold saucers and glasses. He sits by her side and makes her eat and in between asks her lovingly, "And Little One, how is your grand-father ? Does he take constitutionals?" (Laughter) In spite of so many servants he lifts the child himself in his arms and makes her sit in the cab at the time of parting. Why did he do all this ? Was it in her honour or in that of her grand-father. The grand-father will be happy to hear it, so all this. This honour was due to the grand-father.

"That this sadhu received reverence everywhere is not to be wondered at. What a great house he belongs to ! Not everybody finds service in this house. Those who are blessed ones—they are indeed very lucky. That is why on going to the Math one should serve sadhus."

Mohan—Once, working day and night in connection with a festival in the Math, everybody was tired out. More so the bhaktas of this place. In the evening, we were resting for a while. Keshta Lal Maharaj comes and says lovingly, "Please go and wash the courtyard a little. The food for Thakur can only be cooked then. Whom else shall I ask ? Nobody will do it."

M. (joyfully)—Ah ! Was it Kesta Lal Maharaj speaking ? No, it was Thakur. Serve others and do not accept service for yourself—this is what Thakur said through this incident. Thakur used to sing this song.

M begins to sing overwhelmed with emotion.

Sri Krishna says—

“I am not hesitant to grant *mukti*, I hesitate to grant pure *bhakti*.

On account of *bhakti*, I bear the burden of Nanda in the house of Nanda.

He who gains my *bhakti*, receives service everywhere, having conquered the three worlds.

M.—When He accepts somebody's service, it means that His grace has dawned on him. (Keeping silent for a moment) One day, Thakur said, “With sugar-syrup one makes sugar toys, elephants, maths and the rest but when they are powdered and put in water they again turn into the same syrup. He is all that, He pervades the whole universe. One comes out of Him and goes back into Him.” He looks after everybody. Suresh Mitra's cab was returning to Calcutta. The *bhaktas* said, “If there is no room inside the cab we shall sit on the roof.” Thakur immediately reacted: “What is this ? It appears you are not thinking of the other side. The horse will die.” He is one with all creation, you see, that is why he said it. He could not pluck a leaf—his plucking of flowers and Bel leaves had stopped. He took every flowering tree to be a bouquet, already offered in worship to Vishwanath—he saw that His worship is going on incessantly. Therefore I say to Doctor Babu, “If you have to stay for more than half an hour, you should pay off the cabman and return by tram. It is a young horse. It may get fatigued and the coachman too.

22nd of August 1923.

M is seated on the roof of the 3rd floor. Four new bhaktas have arrived. He is talking to them about God. It is six now. The bhaktas leave. Lower, in the western room of the first floor the bhaktas have assembled. M arrives in that room after some time. Shukalal, Doctor, Manoranjana, Vinay, Nalini the Younger, Ramesh the Younger, Jiten the Elder, Jiten the Younger, Viranchi, Yogen, Mani, Durgapada, Yatin, Nag, Sudhir, Shanti, Jagabandhu and others have arrived. There is also a teacher from the Teacher Training School. He has been with Nag Mahashay. M says to him, "Let us go, sit there and talk. These people will perform their worship here." Saying this, he gets up and sits down in the verandah. Hearing this from M, Jiten the Younger and another bhakta begin to meditate in the room. Then all of them take to meditation. It is half past eight now. M enters the room and sits down on the floor. It is all quiet. After a while he begins to talk of God.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur said, "There are two classes of bhaktas—the inner circle and the outer circle. Those of the inner circle get awakening easily, and in those of the outer circle a little of I-ness persists. The attitude of the later is that they will not attain knowledge without tapasya. Thakur used to compare them with the inner and outer pillars of the Natmandir. The inner pillars as if the inner circle of devotees, the outer ones the outer circle. But they are pillars all the same. He would take work out of the inner circle, so he loved them so much—they are being made to work in America, Europe and many other places.

M. (To Mohan)—It was 9 p.m. one day. There was nobody in the room. Thakur came out and stood in the western verandah. In front, the Ganga was flowing with a sweet murmur. All quiet. Suddenly says he, "Look

here. Let nobody think that he is indispensable." And suddenly he stops, not a word. Then I could not understand its meaning, but now I understand a little. There are so many water pipes. If one of them bursts does the watering machine stop? The engineer changes the broken one and replaces it by the right one. He has numberless pipes. If one breaks, he fixes a new one, so that the bhakta may not have the arrogance to think that he is indispensable.

M. (To Durgapada)—It was another day, the full-moon day. Thakur went to Navin Sen's house in Kalu Tota. Keshab Sen had passed away. I was then living in Shyampukur. Taking some risk, I reached there when all were asleep. Sitting down on the outer platform of Navin Sen's house I listened to all the songs. Thakur was upstairs. Ah, what a dance! I could not get the conversation but I heard the songs. All others were asleep in the house. That I was sitting below nobody knew\*. Then at 12 midnight, I returned home. Ah! What a beautiful moon of the Kojagari Poornima (Full-moon Day in the month of Ashwin)! I feel even now as if it happened only the other day. The next day all are seated together, a room full of people, I was at some distance. Thakur approaches me and says suddenly, "Secretly, very nice." He knew that I had gone there. Said he, "One should call upon God secretly—this is very good." He encouraged me.

M goes upstairs to take his meals. The bhaktas are engaged in listening to the Kathamrita. Janam Ashtami (Krishna's Birthday) 1885. The reading continues. Girish Ghosh addressing Thakur as Brahman the Perfect, is singing a hymn of praise. There was some talk also on Dr. Bhagawan Rudra, an M.D.

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\*This Sen family was that of the cousins of his wife. Keshab Sen was a relative of M.

M was a bit late in coming downstairs. He was rendering service to a kitten upstairs. He was feeding it himself with milk. It had been his guest for some days. It had come itself. Since then, the work of feeding was entrusted to Yatin Nag. He did not feed it, that is why M was feeding it himself.

M. (To the bhaktas) I am late. There is a guest in the house. I was serving him. The person who was entrusted with it forgot to give him rice. So I gave him milk. This guest is a kitten. It is so small. It has already learnt how to protect itself. What a wonder ! How did it come ?

M. (To Jiten the Elder)—Did you hear about Dr. Rudra in the Kathamrita ? Thakur said, "It is like pulling out the tongue of the cow." Perhaps the doctor thought, let me diagnose it thoroughly, but he had little idea that the patient was dying on the other side. The doctors, especially those who use the knife become heartless—the people of the group of Sarvadhikari. However little may be the trouble they immediately say, "Come on, let me open it". One of our relations developed a carbuncle on the thigh. The big surgeons said that amputation would have to be carried out. The girl-patient said, "No, not that. I prefer to die like this." At last when entrusted to a Kaviraj she was all right. Mr. Bird said in his lecture, "The operation was successful, unfortunately the patient succumbed." (Loud laughter). At this, Nand Hal-dar said, "Operation, of course, you did successfully, friend, but what have you done to the patient who is finished."

"A woman devotee wrote a letter to another woman devotee consoling her, "Mother, you should not worry. He is a doctor. He uses the knife. He has no heart. It is no use expecting anything from him. Call on the Lord. He will give him the right judgment. He will rid you of your distress." The husband of this woman was a

doctor. The husband keeps company of sadhus, having sent the wife home."

It is 10 p.m. The bhaktas are bidding good-bye. As soon as Dr. Kartik Bakshi says namaskar, M says with a feigned surprise, "Oh, Doctor Babu, you were here!" (M and others go into peels of laughter).

24th August 1923.

5

Morton School, the western room on the 1st floor. It is quarter to eight in the evening, in the month of Bhadra. M is meditating as usual along with the bhaktas. Mukand has arrived. He is the Rector of the Rampur Hat (School). Another new young bhakta has arrived too. After the meditation, the youngman requests M to come out for a while. M and the young man, standing in the northern portion of the verandah overlooking the road go on discussing something for a long time. The bhaktas become impatient. M is not keeping fit, so they are worried lest his disease should become worse. After some more time both of them enter the room. When M has seated himself on the floor, the youngman taking the dust of his feet leaves. After a short while M begins—

M. (To a young bhakta)—What a keenness this young man has—like the naked sword out of a sheath! He has married—his wife is sixteen or seventeen. The father-in-law earns two and a half thousand rupees a month—he is a Superintending Engineer. His brothers are all pleaders of the Alipore Court, his father has retired from service. The mother died two years ago. He himself was a lecturer in the University Science College. He was preparing for the P.R.S. (Premchand Raichand School)—studying in a garden towards Bhawanipore. But he could not study much—he would keep on thinking of God.

Tomorrow is the Jhulan Purnima. On this auspicious day he will give up the worldly life. A stage of deep dispassion. I gave him suggestion—that he should wait for some time and consult some more persons. But he says, “No, tomorrow is the Full-moon Day. I shall leave tomorrow. What a strong determination ! There are others. They have no worldly ties to bind them, even then they can’t do it—flaccid cheora-mix ! Those who have not married have a great chance. Remaining unmarried makes a world of difference—one is saved a world of difficulties. (To Shachi) What do you say, Shachi Babu ? Let the marriage be after fifteen years. It is not right now. The boy who is leaving, what a renunciation he has ! On asking him I came to know that the wife is obedient. He says, “God will grant her the right reason. What can I do ? She will have no difficulty about food and clothing.”

M began to sing emotionally—

Hare Murare ! Hare Murare ! Hare Murare !

Who can stem the tide of this youthful love ?

I shall break this wall of sand and fulfil my heart’s desire etc.,

This is the condition of this young-man—I shall break this wall of sand and fulfil my heart’s desire !

25th August 1923.

It is almost evening. Seated in the same room, M sings the ‘Agmani Song’\*. The autumn has set in. So his heart is inspired with Mother Durga.

—How did you fare in the strangers’ house, O my Uma ?

What stories the people carry ! So shocking to the heart !

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\*The Agmani song : The song before the Durga Puja to welcome Mother Shakti, Durga.

How can the mother bear, the son-in-law, they say,  
begs from door to door.

This time when he comes to fetch I shall say, Uma  
is not within.

Smearing his body with ashes from the pyre, this  
fellow goes about delightfully!

Do you likewise rub your golden body with that ash ?  
O' tell me.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Swamiji (Vivekananda) had recently learnt this song. Having come to know of it Thakur said, "Is it that you have learnt the Agmani Song ? Why not sing it ?" Swamiji began to sing. And Thakur standing on the embankment, plunged in deep samadhi; on the right the Nahabat, on the left the Ganga. Seeing the Mother in the *vatsalya-bhava*\*, he went into samadhi. The Devi-paksha†, evening is about to set in.

The Bhakta of Bhai Bhupati (with humility, hands folded)—Sir, my wife received spiritual initiation in a dream. But when she woke up she could not remember the mantra. What is the way to recover it ?

M. (seriously)—A very difficult thing. Don't you go to the Math ? There is Swami Shivananda in the Math. Please tell him. How many times have you been to the Math ?

The Bhakta—Five or six times.

M.—Go once again and offer your salutations. Then go again and ask. Not right to ask the first day.

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\*The attitude of the mother towards the child.

†The fortnight of the autumnal worship of Mother Durga.

The Bhakta (pointing towards his companion)—Him, the Paramahansa Deva blessed one night by placing his hand on his head but he hasn't that much bhakti for him.

M.—This is highly esoteric. His grace has dawned on him. He is the personification of grace. He will come when called and not otherwise—it is not so. Does he think about us more or do we think on him? He has graced him.

The Bhakta—Sir, the visions of gods and goddesses that we have in dreams, are they true or false?

M.—Thakur used to say, "All are true—the dreams of gods and goddesses—not one of them is untrue." One day, a bhakta said, "In my dream, I have visions of many gods and goddesses." Thakur began to weep on hearing so.

M goes upstairs to take his meals. The bhaktas are listening to the Bhagavata—The Birth of Sri Krishna. It is quarter to nine at night. M is not keeping fit these days. That is why the bhaktas went upstairs after a while to say good-bye. They thought that coming down so late at night might add to his illness. But he would not let them leave. Accompanied by the bhaktas he came down to the first floor. Says he, "It is not so late yet. Listen for a while to the Kathamrita, all of you." Saying this, he started reading from the Kathamrita—The 21st chapter from volume IV, part five.

M is reading :—"It is evening now....Thakur, seated on his asana, is repeating the Mother's name, and meditating on Her. Master is in the room.....After the meditation, for a while, Thakur is again conversing with the bhaktas.....Sri Ramakrishna (To M)—He who meditates on Him night and day, what need has he of sandhya? He who utters Kali at the three conjunctions of the day and night, what need has he of puja and sandhya?

The sandhya merges into the Gayatri and the Gayatri into OM. When by pronouncing OM just once, one enters into samadhi, one is established.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Here is a scene. Think over it all the twenty-four hours. This will lead to meditation—you will feel surcharged with Him.

The bhaktas are taking their leave.

Bhupati Bhakta—Since the departure of the Guru Maharaj so many things have started cropping up in the mind.

M.—They will get resolved by keeping the company of sadhus. Go to the Math. That is the reason why Thakur has brought about the Math. Just as one goes to the hospital for the cure of a disease, one should go to the Math for the cure of the disease of 'ignorance'. To cure mental disorders, there is no hospital anywhere better than this one in this age.

Calcutta, 27th August, 1923

10th Bhadra, 1330 (Bengali year)

Monday, the 2nd Day of the Dark Fortnight

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### INDIA RISING, THE WORLD RISE~

M is seated in the western room on the first floor. It is 8 p.m. now. Shukalal, Doctor, Vinay, Amrit, Nalini the Younger, Yogen, Manoranjana, Jiten the Younger and others are there. Swami Abhedananda is one of the intimate disciples of Thakur. He has recently set up a Vedanta Society in the Central Avenue at Calcutta. At the behest of M, Mohan has enrolled himself a member of this society. Mohan has returned from this society; with him are Mani and Ramni. M says, "He has been in America for twenty-five years. He has served Thakur for about a year, having left everything. Besides he is a matchless savant. He underwent a great deal of tapasya, so they called him, "Kali Tapasvi." Where will you get such an opportunity? Everybody should go there. (To Mohan) We shall hear about the Vedanta Society later on. Now a 'scene' from the Kathamrita is being read. Just listen.

M is reading the Kathamrita:—"Thakur is seated in the living-room of Balaram, having assembled the bhaktas—a picture of joy divine. Today is the last day of the Car Festival. Sri Ramakrishna says to Balaram's father and others: There is a book, Bhaktamal of the Vaishnavites. It is a beautiful book, but sings only one tune. It stops at nothing less than Bhagavati getting initiated to a vaishnava mantra, at one place.....A similar thing they say, there is in the Srimad Bhagavata too. Crossing the ocean of the world without being initiated to the Keshva-mantra is the same as crossing the ocean by

holding the tail of a dog. The men of different cults have only brought out the greatness of their own. The Shaktas also try to belittle the Vaishnavas. Sri Krishna is the pilot of the ocean of the world—he takes one across. The Shaktas say, "Of course, it is. She the Mother is the empress of empresses. Will She come herself to take one across? She has engaged Krishna to take across." (Loud laughter) And how much they boast about their own creed! He who synthetizes is the man. Most of the people are stereotype but I see that all is one. The Shaktism, the Vaishnavism, the Vedantism—all are based in one. He who is formless is also with form—all are but His different forms...of whom the Veda talks, He is also the subject of the Tantra, He is the subject of the Puranas too—all about one and the same Satchidananda. His is the eternity, His the leela.

M. (To the bhaktas)—We are thinking we should read one or two scenes daily. By doing so we shall be thinking of him. It will be meditation on him. We have been doing so for the last two days, it is the third day.

M. (To Mohan)—Which ones have been done during the last two days? Let them hear.

Mohan—First, Thakur is sitting in his room in the Dakshineshwar Temple. The evening is past. He says to the bhaktas, "He who thinks on God day and night has no need of sandhya. In Rishikesh, a sadhu would come out early in the morning, stand beside a spring and say, "Well done! well done!" nothing besides that, no japa, no tapa. Whether He is with form or without form, what need to think over all such questions? One should weep and say to Him secretly in solitude, O Lord, make Yourself visible to us, whatever You may be.

"Second, Thakur is returning from Jhautala. M and Latu are standing in the Panchavati. To the west of

Thakur, a rising cloud embellishing the horizon is being reflected in the waters of the Ganga. Thereby the Ganga water looks dark. God Himself in human form roams about on the bank of the Ganga—for the good of humanity.

M. (To the bhaktas)—By reading books the mind does not retain. It is easy to fix such a scene in the mind. Thinking of it, one meditates on Him.

Amrit—If that is so, shouldn't one read books ?

M.—Yes. Those who want to read, let them. But it should be compared with the touch-stone of Thakur's word. The holy books contain many non-essential parts. If you can't catch it, you fall into trouble. The sugar is mixed with the sand there. It is better to throw away sand and take only sugar. Sri Krishna gave the Gita—it is the essence of the Vedas, their correct interpretation. (To the bhaktas)—There are three steps. The first one shastras, the second word of the guru and the third direct realization, that is one's own experience. By having faith in the word of the guru one goes very far. The guru, leaving out the non-essentials, brushing off the sand, gives only sugar. Thakur said to a bhakta, "These days, so and so is advancing fast. He has come to have faith in the word of the guru." And the third, direct realization, that is seeing Him. The shastra, the word of the guru, and the direct experience are successively good.

## 2

M. (To Mohan)—Yes, now read your notes of the lecture of the Vedanta Society.

Mohan—The topic for today was Rajayoga, self-control. There were about a hundred students. Abhedananda Maharaj said, "Self-control means control of the mind, to subjugate the mind. It is the corner-stone of

religious life. You may conquer the whole world but if you have not been able to conquer your mind, it has all been in vain. Pleasure and pain are the creations of the mind. Besides, lust and anger etc., our great enemies—these also arise through the mind and push the man into grief and pain. The Lord says in the Gita :

ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।

सङ्गात्सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥ (2:62)

—Whatever one thinks upon, gradually there comes a pull, an attraction from it. Then one begins to desire the thing. When an obstacle comes one feels angry and anger leads to destruction. Therefore, initially what is needed is the control of mind. Now, how to attain this control ? Those who have attained this control of the mind partially or wholly—their company should be sought, they should be served. If a player of cards keeps the company of somebody, he would like to play cards. Similarly keeping the company of drunkards and other addicts one has to become like them. And, keep the company of sadhus and holy men, you will also become a sadhu. A man is known by the company he keeps. Therefore, what company you want has to be decided before hand. If you want God, seek the company of those who have realized God or are longing to realize Him—Paramahansa Deva used to say : If wet wood is placed near the fire its water dries up gradually and in the end it catches fire itself. That is why the company of sadhus is necessary for bhaktas. It rids the mind of bad tendencies. Self-control is attained when mastery over desire, anger, greed and past deeds is attained.

“It is a very painful matter that the boys of today have no ideal in life. That is why the character too does not get set. Telling the truth they don't know, have no interest in morality. This is a very low state. Try to be good ; the modern education cannot impart a strong

sense of morality. It is an education without an ideal. God-realization is the ideal of human life. Keeping this greatest of ideals before you set out. Then character will be formed, your mind will get strength. I have seen in America the youngmen trying to improve and make their future life prosperous. Girls, four or five years old, dance and act. If one starts at this stage one becomes sound. Whatever education is to be imparted it is to be between the age of five to twelve. Thereafter, education is not so fruitful. Fixing your ideal, take to a profession for earning your livelihood.—Keep on working but along with it practise sadhan and bhajan. Start teaching Vedas to the boys in their early age. You will see that they will come out as great pundits.

“Nobody is small. None of those whom you call small is really so. Hadi and Domes—these were high castes in Buddhistic order. Buddha Dharma Sangha was later known as Dome in the degenerated form of the language. In the days of Ballal Sen, all these persecutions were resorted to. They were made outcasts, they were degraded. So they are helpless, poor fellows ! They earn their living by cane, bamboo and such other work. I used to see in Kankhal. The chamars were not allowed to draw water from the well, but the Muslims could. The scriptures say that water is God, man is God. But you people have degraded them, worse than animals. The pariahs of Madras and Namahshudras of Bengal are all your creations. By the will of God, therefore, you have been getting shoe-beatings from the *mlechhas* for a thousand years. It is all His doing. Paramahansa Deva has taught in this age : “Mother, I am baser even than the scavenger.” That is why going to the doorsteps of the scavenger, he cleaned the drain with his hair. And he said, “Ma, I a Brahmin—rid me of this pride. This remaining I shall not be able to attain You.”

"The people of this country achieve nothing because of this mean mentality—even the Congress is not able to do anything. If you work on the surface only, the dirt at the bottom remains. Such a way is no use. Have a peep inside yourself, raise your mind higher. You will see that you will rise high—thinking low of others one becomes low oneself. Free them and try to free yourselves. If you proceed by deception you will attain nothing. You will also not realize God. This is a very distant thing. By placing the burden on God when you yourself are unjust, you can arrive nowhere. Give up hypocrisy—let your tongue be one with your mind. Embrace everybody taking him as a human-being. All are His children. Just see how low our country has fallen because of mutual bickerings. Thousands are taking to the legal profession. They should try for quarrels to decrease. Instead they add to them. This is the condition of a community having no self-respect. Now, there is no character in this country. Build it and you will see all the rest will come in no time.

"Faith in God is necessary. Then alone will come self-control. With it, whatever you try you will succeed. Selfish thinking needs to be reduced. How to do good to others should be our care. The animal-like treatment you give to your fellow-men is being meted out to you by the foreigner. There is no escape from the Retribution of Nature. He who has achieved self-control is a yogi. Whether you live a worldly life or have embraced san-nyasa, whether you are in white or gerua, the test remains the same whether you have been able to subjugate your mind or not. Once the mind is conquered God is realized. Again it is only when God has been realized that real victory of the mind is achieved. If one prays as aspirant He helps. When the mind has been controlled, character formed, one achieves one's own freedom. Then the country also attains freedom."

M.—Beautifully said. The essence is : ‘God-realization the ideal of human life’. Having determined this, you may do what you like. Then the possibility of being out of step is very little. Were we all to do this, the country would achieve independence in no time. And then to hold on to Thakur. He is the ideal of this age. He has come to raise India. India rising the world rises. The rise of India is inevitable.

## 3

Now M is listening to the questions and answers of the Vedanta Society of Swami Abhedananda.

Question—What is a conscious state ?

Swami Abhedananda—Conscious state and sub-conscious states are like the top of the wave and the below of the water.

Question—What is the cause of desire ?

Answer—The Yogis say it is *sanskara*, the impression of the past karmas. The impression of the external objects remains strung in the mind in potential form. You have taken a mango, it tastes nice. This idea gets impressed on the mind. The same if it were bad. The *sanskaras* are the remnants of past experiences. Your present life is being directed by the *sanskaras* of previous births. The stream of your life flows incessantly on. Individuality is only a wave. The course of this stream will end in the Boundless Ocean. The mind becoming sick, you commit suicide. You think all is over, that is not so. Of course, this chapter ends here but the next life will start again from there. You would have made your next life better had you accepted pain like a hero and lived on. Everybody will have to realize God one day. If work is done with full knowledge, one has not to grope in the dark. We have done everything with full knowledge. As soon as *sanskaras* rise in the mind try to control them.

The mind cannot be relied upon so easily. Like the Niagra Falls, it is peaceful outside but its inside is extremely restless, very powerful. The conquerors of countries are called heroes but the real heroes are those who have conquered the mind—Buddha, Jesus, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, all these. Napoleon and Alexander, they were slaves to ambition. Living in the world after the conquest of the mind can do no harm. If you walk with shoes on, the thorn does not prick the foot.

Question—How to get rid of sanskaras ?

Answer—This is not possible. Even so, it becomes easier by keeping holy company, right thinking and the rest. Sit down to meditate on God daily and carry out japa and dhyana. Japa-dhyana means repetition of the same idea. Your present state has taken the form of a habit. To subjugate it, you will have to create a counter habit. Japa-dhyana builds it up. Japa-dhyana means the attempt to make the mind steady. It is this the Gita calls Abhyasa-Yoga, the Path of Practice. And you should pray to God.

Question—If the sanskaras have such powerful effect, then where is the place of *adrishata* (unseen fate) and *purushakara* (human effort, free-will) and the rest ?

Answer—The *Adrishata* means the unknown cause. This is called the fruit of action by the jnanis. The ignorant call it fate. The bhaktas call it God's will. All these are the same. *Purushakara* also has a place. You certainly have free will but on a limited scale. By means of it you can break, do away with the shackles of sanskaras. The demon and the God both are within you. Awake God, the demon will die itself. God has infinite power but it is all lying potential. Awaken that power.

“Sit firm in your seat morning or evening. Then study your mind—what have I done during the whole day, how many times I was angry, how many times I played a

slave to my senses—You will analyse all these. If you have a bad habit, control it. If you are unable to do so, pray to Him for strength. Say: "O God, I am Your child. Give me the strength, so that I may not tread the wrong path, may not engage myself in a bad habit." He will surely give you the strength. With self-confidence and courage, study your mind and concentrate it on the Lord. Keep a diary. Trying this way you will see after three months how much you have been changed. Why do you consider yourself so weak? There is an infinite strength within you. We were also like you, we too felt disappointment. Had I not taken courage then, had self-confidence not been there, had I not put faith in the word of the guru, could I ever have done it? Look, by means of these I have conquered the world. I have no fear of death. Courage is needed. Don't be afraid. Worldly people may live and work within the world but they must wear the gerua inside. What is the use of just putting on the gerua externally? Cover yourself with the fire of wisdom. We are worldly, we cannot attain, we shall not succeed—such should not be your fear. You are raising a confusion, shouting 'My and mine.' Did you bring wife, children, money with you? As you came, so must you return. Even a multi-millionaire will not be able to carry away a needle. Only the character will accompany you. If this is good, the world is at your feet, you have attained divinity in this very life."

Question—Will God be realized when the mind has become steady?

Answer—Why not. There are many processes. Just make a start. Without climbing the tree, how can you get at the fruit?—No, impossible. Other instruction will be imparted later on. The same path does not suit everybody, try.

Question—Where have I been able to overcome temptation ? Since we are His dear children why does He not do it ?

Answer—Yes, if you say it with utmost sincerity, He would certainly do it. "I am not able to overcome these passions. O Lord, come to my help," thus pray. Nothing happens except when He wills, son. Thakur used to say, "Tying Advaitism to the corner of your cloth go where you like." Gain the knowledge of Advaita and live in the house-hold.

"The realization that I am God serves the purpose. This is what is called the knowledge of the Advaita. Thakur has explained the Neo-Vedanta. Shankar had done so in Sanskrit twelve hundred years ago. Except for the sadhus almost nobody else could study it. The Neo-Vedanta as interpreted by us can be studied by all. Even the foreigners are reading it. Thakur had spoken in Bengali. In the foreign countries we explain it in English in plain words, in every day language, we are propagating it. The Paramahansa Deva taught us this way. It is our good fortune. So much study of the shastras is therefore not needed. The shastra is within you. When this fundamental is determined, all instruction will arise from within. The mind will direct what to accept and what to reject. So I ask you to do this only : Recover shastras from within. I am His—when this belief takes root to some extent you will get the shastras, you will be able to understand them. Outside help will not be needed then.

"Do not merely make the verbal quoting of shastras your excuse : 'Five thousand years ago the rishis said this or Swami Vivekananda said that.' Don't merely make such excuses. Determine first of all what you are saying. When they are quoted in America, they say, "Old thing, throw it away." You merely quote, therefore you are

backward. Don't bring the words of the rishis to your lips till you can act like them. You merely say verbally that we are the descendents of rishis. Mere words will cut no ice. You will have to demonstrate by your qualities and actions that you are the descendents of rishis. Many doctors of the West stand with folded hands beside us, beside the culture of India. Many members of the Parliament, lords and knights were our disciples. They know how to appreciate qualities. Seeing quality they all bow to it. Mere words don't satisfy them. Be rishis—the world will be at your feet.

“What you need is the determination and courage to do. Do or die. You need self-confidence, courage and faith in God. Giving me just the fare of the journey, Swami Vivekananda returned to India. With this I went from England to New York. There were only two or three friends of Swamiji—Vedantists. With faith in God and courage, the work was started. Food and clothing began to pour in. During the first seven months, I delivered ninety lectures. Expenses were met by basket collection. Very grateful people they are. During childhood I became a sadhu and went on foot to Kashi, Hardwar, Rishikesh and the Himalayas. I had faith that my food and clothing were assured before hand. So far no obstruction could ever stop me. He looks to everything. Have faith in Him and take to work. Have faith in the word of the guru.”

M.—Excellent all these ! Self-effort and dependence on God, both are needed—practice and renunciation. Renunciation means love of God. Without faith in God, character cannot be built. And how beautifully he says : Take to work. It will not do just to sit and think. You have to be up and doing. Self-effort is needed. Then alone Grace will descend. In the present age, those who work listening to Thakur's word will only succeed. He

said, "Weep and pray to Him : God grant me the right reason. Company of sadhus, prayer and effort are needed."

Calcutta, 29th August 1923

12th of Bhadra, 1330 (Bengali year)

Wednesday, the 4th Day of the Dark Fortnight.

**BODY, FAMILY, SOCIETY TO BE  
GOD-ORIENTED**

1

The living-room of Morton School on the first floor. Besides the usual visiting bhaktas there are many others. Ramni is adding to the joy of all by singing a song. It is seven in the evening. Song—

You are inaudible, intangible, invisible and immutable.

O Lord, without devotion, can I know you, by mere rituals and sacrifices ?

M has come downstairs now and has taken his seat. Song over, they meditate. Now he holds spiritual discourse with the bhaktas.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur used to say : “Mother can be seen. Besides one can talk to Her in the same way as you and I are talking. For example, some have heard about milk, some have seen it, and some have drunk it. Talking to Her is like drinking milk.” The same Mother has come as Thakur. He himself said so. Could everybody recognize him ? Those who could worshipped him outright as Parabrahman—for example Girish Babu. That is why he enjoined upon us to perform tapasya. By performing tapasya one begins to understand somewhat. Those who had the tapasya of their previous births to their credit could immediately recognize. Tapasya means an attempt to know God, to try

to realize one's own self and to know one's home. Those who have been making this attempt previously can quickly believe and recognize. Even then, a bit of doubt still lurks in their minds. He Himself removes that doubt. He said to them, "I am the same Indivisible Satchidananda who is beyond mind and speech." Why did he say so? —Because he knew that those people would accept it. They are jewellers, if told they would be able to appreciate. They had attempted it previously, that is why they believed firmly no sooner a hint was made. But those who are beginners, whose desire to enjoy has not ended cannot accept it. Having enjoyed the world for many a life, one may if at all have the desire to realize Him. That is why he used to say, "Hungry for enjoyment cannot recognize." And He would say "The *Malya*\* wind turns every tree into a sandal-wood tree but the bamboo remains what it is."

"During the days of Jesus, there was a lady devotee, Mary by name. She would just keep on looking at Jesus. She had recognized him as God. That is why she had no other attraction—a loving bhakta she was. During the time of Chaitanya Deva also there were such bhaktas. During the days of Thakur also, there were such bhaktas. They would keep on gazing at him. They had no other interest. That is why Thakur said, "If the whole mind is collected and directed to me, what else remains for him?" Everybody cannot have such faith. That is why he would employ other means for such persons. One day, there is music in the room. There are several persons, nothing else anywhere. Suddenly says he: "Mother has come. Mother has come. Come in Mother, take your seat." Exactly as if somebody had really arrived, the same feelings, the same consideration, the same welcome

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\* a fragrant wind blowing on the Western Ghats from which the best sandal-wood is brought.

he gave. On another day too, music was going on. Vijay Krishna Goswami and others belonging to the Brahmo Samaj were there. Thakur stood up saying, "Mother has arrived, Mother has come." Since people do not believe, he said again: "I swear: Verily Mother has come." To Vivekananda he said, 'No, I have no faith in your word. The Mother has said, how can that be so (a lie)? Everything is tallying.' Did he not say in the beginning that Thakur's visions of God were mere hallucinations? That is why Thakur asked Mother one day. The Mother then told him, "How is that possible, my son, since everything tallies." In other words, whatever She says through the mouth of Thakur after appearing to him came out to be true. For example, if Mother appeared and said, "So and so will come," they did actually come. Thereafter he said to Vivekananda, "He who is called Parabrahman in the Veda, Him I call Ma."

M. (To the newly-arrived bhakta of Khulna)—Sadhana is needed. Living within various works the mind does not remain steady. That is why in between one should retire into solitude. So the Gita enjoins selfless work. If selfless work is to be performed rightly one has to retire into solitude every now and then. Otherwise rust covers the mind. What is rust, do you know?—Corrosives, dirt, attachments. It looks as if one is working selflessly but it is possible that a subtle desire for worldly recognition lurks. That is why it is detected in solitude. For those who live in family it is indispensable. Even sadhus need it. That is why Thakur emphasized the need for occasional retirement into solitude so much. Do you know what is his prescription? Constant company of the holy, prayer with a yearning heart and occasional retirement into solitude. The bhaktas must need do so. Only then is maintained the right constitution. Otherwise self-delusion comes in. It appears as if I have attained

everything, I am living in the world like King Janak. Saying this, M began to sing fully absorbed—

Dive, dive deep into the sea of Divine Beauty, O my mind.

Search the 'unfathomable waters and you will reach the treasure of gems of Love.

Dive, dive, dive deeply, you will find Vrindaban inside your heart.

Light, light, light up the lamp of jnana, it will keep giving light for ever.

Row, row, row, who steers your boat over land, who ? Kabir says, Listen, listen, listen and meditate on Guru's holy feet.

M. (to the bhaktas)—He used to sing these songs to Brahmo bhaktas. It means that he wanted them to practise sadhan and bhajan. Sermons alone can't do much. Going into solitude and practising sadhan for some days one can have taste of it. If one retires every now and then, this feeling gets established. God is real, the world transitory, of two days—this awareness gets rooted. Sermonizing ends then; work proceeds on right lines (To Jiten the Elder) Once, Vijay Krishna Goswami was living in a house at the turning of the Amherst Street. Always absorbed in divine emotion. As soon as I went to him he expressed his great joy and said, "Please sing, do, that song of his." I sang the same song. Thakur used to sing it when these people visited him, isn't it, so that they may take to tapasya for some time. That is why it is such a favourite song. Having renounced all, he is now repeating His name. It has taken him so long to understand the purpose of Thakur's singing this song.

M. (To the youngman)—What a renunciation Roop and Sanatana had ! They were ministers of the Nawab of Bengal.

They had been corresponding with Mahaprabhu for a long time. At last they wrote, "Lord, we cannot stay here at home any longer." Mahaprabhu replied in one couplet : "Like a loose woman remaining engaged in her household work but constantly thinking of her paramour without anybody knowing it, this is how you should live in this world." But they could not do so for long. They forsook and left. Their means were scanty, even so they made provision for the family and came out. They happened to meet Mahaprabhu in Kashi. On seeing them Mahaprabhu goes to embrace them. But Sanatana recedes and says, "Lord, please don't touch me. I am a moth, impure." He had given up all and yet he said these words. Deep dispassion he had, didn't he? Mahaprabhu asked them to go and live in Vrindaban. When one develops sincere love for Him, nothing else one likes.

M. (To Jiten the Elder)—We decided we must meditate on one of his scenes daily. Three have already been done. The first one : In the evening, Thakur is seated on his asana at Dakshineswar. The meditation over, He says to the bhaktas, "He who thinks on Him day and night has no need of sandhya." A sadhu in Rishikesh would stand the whole day near a spring and say, "Ah ! well done, well done !" What a wonder ! (To the bhakta) And which are the other two ?

The Bhakta—A rising cloud up in the sky. It is casting its reflection on the water of the Ganga—this dark background scenery behind Thakur. He is returning to his room from the Panchavati. The third one in the temple-house of Balaram. He said to Balaram's father : Most of the people harp on one tune but I see that all is One—He who is formless is also with form.

M.—And there is another scene : That day Thakur sings so many songs—at first the song of Gaur Leela, then the Mothers' name. All bhaktas of Shivapur are

there. He is singing and in between goes into samadhi. It is 3 o'clock.

After a moment's silence he says :

M. (To the bhaktas)—This too is a favourite song of Thakur.

The song—

—Ramchandra, the Lord Consort of Sita, the Lord of the Raghus, the King of the Raghus !

Let us repeat the name of the Lord of Ayodhya. There is none but he....and so on. And this one too used to inspire him so much—

—I shall put on the gerua on my body, I shall wear the ear-rings made of the conch-shell.

In the garb of a yogini, I shall repair to the country where resides my heartless Hari.

I shall make a search for Him in every home in Mathura, being a yogini.

M.—Such a love for Sri Krishna ! They were all women, but they never calculated in terms of their family or status. They renounced all modesty, contempt and the rest. They gave up their children, their parents, their husbands. Having forsaken their homes, they have become yoginis. But why ?—For His sake, for the sake of God. They have had no other aim. How many people can do so ? Who has this much courage ? Those who are doing so much for Him, will He not care for them ? He also becomes a permanent slave to His devotees. That is why Thakur used to say : "On developing an iota of Gopi's love, one is flooded." Chaitanya Deva also had the same state—the state of the gopis. He would refer to himself by talking of Chaitanya. The gopis developed love after attaining Brahman-jnana.

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur used to say : The fundamental is love for Satchidananda, falling into the sea of the Life Eternal. Whether it is done by prayer or by a push, the result is the same. He will be immortal. Whether one is a Vedantist or a Shakta or a Vaishnava, whether one is a Hindu or a Muslim or a Christian whichever way one may take, what is needed is a sincere love for Him. He used to say : Eat whatever way, the sweetened bread will taste sweet.

Having said so M's sea of emotions swelled as if it were. He began to sing song after song like one intoxicated.

Songs—

1. The wave of Gaur's love has touched my body !
2. Time is flowing unceasingly. How much shall I think ? My life has gone to Gauranga.
3. The neighbours raise a scandal. They cast aspersions on my chastity because of Gaur.

How shall I explain and to whom, O' the friend of my heart ? I am dying of shame.

One day, when the Kazi was subdued, Gaur was performing the Kirtan round the city with his troupe.

Shouting, Hari Bol, Hari Bol, he was going through the bazar of Nadia.

Accompanying them, I was able to see his two red-hued holy feet.

One day, there was noise and bustle of the kirtan in the house of Srivasa.

The moon-faced Gaur was rolling with ecstasy in the courtyard of Srivasa.

I stood aside, and hid myself in a corner.

I fell in a swoon and the wife of Srivasa brought me to consciousness.

One day, the moon-faced Gaur was standing at a ghat on the bank of the Ganga, the moon and the sun both shone on Gaur's body.

Seeing the beautiful image of Gaur, the Shaktas and the Shivites were submerged.

Suddenly my water-pot fell down and husband's sister, that angel of death saw it.

30th August, 1923.

## 2

M is seated in the western room of the first floor. The room is full of devotees. He is not well. It is evening. Having meditated for fifteen minutes, he himself sings—

Songs :

1. You will give wealth. But what wealth have you got ?
2. O' the Compassionate One ! To Thy servant...
3. O' mind, return to thy abode.
4. O' the Lord of my life, You are the refuge of the lowly. You are life-breath and the bestower of bliss to life.

You are the Joy Eternal, you are Shiva, beautiful and lovely one.

You are the bewitcher of the minds of yogis, You the charming one !

M sang a number of bhajans. Now he reads the Kathamrita. Thakur is sitting on his small cot. It is the

month of Bhadrapad. It is about eleven o'clock. Meals have not been taken till now. Master (M), Tarak, Adhar, Latu, Harish and others are there. He is describing the condition of the perfected one.

M. (To the bhaktas)—There are characteristics of the perfected ones. They mix with many and talk to them but inwardly their mind remains elevated. No smearing of the *tilak* or anything, no outward sign. Just as the leech falls off at the touch of lime to its mouth, so are woman and gold to them—these cannot bind them. Let a young woman remain ever-so-much beside them like a leech, they are not tempted. This state is to be found in avataras, or it comes when one has seen God.

M. (To the bhakta from Salkha)—This is why Thakur used to tell those who had married to live in the same house with their wife but not to share the bed with her. Let the body not touch the body much, and let there always be talk on godly matters. Let them live like brother and sister. All this has actually happened in his life. Whatever he has said he has shown by practising himself. Why did he marry? Why did he bring the Holy Mother to Dakshineswar? To demonstrate to the world: Though living with the wife yet not indulging in sex. He kept her in the same bed with him for eight months but there was no physical relationship. Such things he did to set an example, so that the bhaktas may find strength, make an effort to live in the pure sentiments of brother and sister. This state of his was a very lofty one—the ideal of Hindu marriage, the husband and wife to jointly practise religion. The highest state of religious achievement is God-realization. The others wouldn't be able to do it, so he lowered it a little and said: "If you cannot at all do that much, have a child or two and then live in this way—like brother and sister." Everything of his was to teach the humanity. To live a worldly life, one needs money. But he said that money should be

earned by the right means and following the right path—and to earn only as much as would suffice for simple meals. After one has made provision for the family, nothing more to be done. Then sit down and meditate on God. Such wants come to the family that the peace of mind is destroyed. If there is money that want may be removed with it. That is why he said that if the bhaktas have money they are already half-liberated in this life. But those who already have sufficient should not try to add to it. Were they to do so how will they find leisure? Let them not make money-earning machines of themselves. And in how many sides he saw! On the one hand, we cannot do without it, on the other there is danger in having it. "Giving up the two extremes, take the middle path," said he. That they can afford simple meals is enough for the bhaktas, they should devote themselves to meditation thereafter.

M. (To the youngman)—Those who have never married and are interested in God, why should they go in for marriage to get entangled? Where is the obligation? But those who have married should make mental renunciation, they should live separate from wife though living in the household. Thakur said: "Under the Bel tree, I saw while meditating, a pretty young woman, delicious food, money and wealth. I asked my mind: O mind! Do you want all this? The mind replied: No, I don't." Therefore, those who have not married should not get married just to test the maxim: Living with woman but not indulging in sex. (Laughter).

M. (To the bhaktas)—Everything will be all right by meditating on Him. When once the mind is drawn towards Him, when the inner gate opens out everything comes right of itself. The mind itself becomes the guru then. It itself instructs what is to be done and when. Then Rambha and Tilottama look like ashes from the pyre.

The mind to which He grants shelter, which He holds gets freed from lust and so on. The five elements, which always remain in the state of excitement, depart having seen the Sport. That is why one should meditate upon the image of the guru, the image of Thakur—मंत्रमूलं गुरोर्वक्त्रं, ध्यानमूलं गुरुमूर्ति पूजामूलं गुरोर्पदम् । —The words of the guru are the basic mantra, the image of the guru the basic object of meditation and the feet of the guru the basic object of worship. One should worship the feet of the guru daily with flowers.

Suddenly M fixes his two solemn, peacefully shining big eyes on the eyes of an unmarried bhakta and says with a soft voice, “‘Meditation on me alone will do.’ That’s why one should meditate on one of his scenes daily.”

Whispering aside these words to the bhakta, seated in that crowded room, he immediately picks up the thread of the conversation—

M. (To the bhaktas)—Thakur had bhava-samadhi on coming to the house of Adhar Sen. The head had dropped on one side of his chest. As he had been standing on one leg he had pain in his foot. Nobody straightened him. That is why he said through a song : “Without a feeling heart, life cannot be saved. How shall I tell my heart’s affair ? O Friend, I am forbidden to do so.” Had there been Baburam and others they would have held him straight. Even if you open your heart who listens ? “The man after the heart walks up the current.” The worldly people want worldly enjoyments, the bhaktas the joy eternal, God. That’s why they, the worldly do not understand even when one tells them the affair of one’s heart, that is, of God. Suppose somebody wants a child of five to understand the Evolution theory of Darwin, the child will understand nothing. The attempt would be futile. It is the same if one spoke of the nature

of the Supreme Being to a worldly person. He will not understand, he will not like it.

M. (To the Doctor)—Chaitanya Deva came four hundred years ago. Some old songs about him are available but not much of the scenes. On the other hand, we actually lived with the Chaitanya of this age. We have so many of his scenes. Besides men of the older generation are also there. It is so easy now. By meditating on them one by one through the twenty four hours of the day, everything will come out right. Here is a scene from Chaitanya Deva—The deliverance of Chopal Gopal. He had leprosy. When he came to Kashi, he got the divine command, "I have come to Navadweep. You go there too."

The song says—

'O Lord Gaur and Nitai, both of you two brothers are full of compassion. I had gone to Kashi but I was told by Kashi Vishveshwar : I have come to Nadia in Shachi's house. I have recognized you, O Lord.'

M. (To the bhaktas of Salkha)—What do you say ? The more you proceed towards Calcutta from Kashi, the more you will leave Kashi behind. Isn't it ? By taking the mind towards Him, the pull of worldliness decreases.

"In Puri there was Sarva Bhaum, a great pundit. He said to Chaitanya Deva, "You are just a boy of twenty four. Why have you entered sannyasa, taking up the gerua ? Have you gained full control of your mind ? Read Vedanta." Chaitanya Deva folded his hands and said, "I am helpless. Krishna has pulled me out here." Serva Bhaum said, "All right. Just stick out your tongue." As he stuck out his tongue, he placed a little sugar over it. It did not water, instead the wind carried away the sugar, the way it happens when sugar is put on a dry leaf. His mind was in a state of elevation—he was not

conscious of his body. Sarva Bhaum understood then that he was an avatara. He could not teach in the 'tola' (Sanskrit School). One day, while explaining the roots of words he gave such a spiritual explanation that the boys sat with their cheeks resting on their palms. They could not understand anything, for he was talking in the state of bhava.

"How can they be compared with others ? So the woman devotee had said to the Holy Mother, "The sadhus come for their own deliverance but he (Thakur) came to grant deliverance. Therefore Mother, how can he be compared with other sadhus ?" Chaitanya Deva, Thakur—they have no similarity with others."

The bhaktas took their leave. It was 10 p.m. M is seated in the verandah of the room on the third floor. A brahmachari comes upstairs with a picture of Thakur and the Kathamrita. He says to M, "Sir, what about becoming a member of the Vedanta Society?" M replies, "It is good, so very nice. Is education confined to colleges alone ? What an advantage you have there ? He was in America for full twenty five years. How much experience he has ! And highly learned too. Moreover he is Thakur's man—he has served him for a year. This is a great advantage. Should one give up such a chance ? Had I been younger I would have gone. Is that the only college ? All these make a college, Vivekananda Society, Theosophical Society, Vedanta Society and so on, one should go to all these places. The Brahmo Samaj, the Church, it is good to attend them all. All these make a college. And above all the Math. As long as He keeps you here what else will you do if not visit them ? It is very good to go there. But of course, if He grants renunciation—that you sit in a solitary corner and think of Him alone it is another matter. But till that state comes it is good to visit all these. Is there

only one path leading to Him ? No, so many. He may take one on any path, who knows ? How much of study did he make Vivekananda pursue ?

31st August 1923.

## 3

M is pacing the verandah on the first floor of the Morton School. He is conversing with Gopen. Shukalal, Doctor, Amrit. Vinay and others are sitting in the western room. Jiten the Younger, Makhan and Mukund have arrived. M enters the room. Along with him enters Jagabandhu. He is coming back from the Vedanta Society. M asks him to read out his notes taken at the lecture.

Today was a question-answer class. Sixty members were present. One of the persons asked, "Has thinking any power ?"

Swami Abhedananda—Yes, it has great power. As you think so is your surrounding. The doctors think of disease, the lawyers of law suits, because of it they are surrounded by patients and clients. By changing the thinking of your mind you can become anything, even change your body. You can be a king if you so desire. You have *moha*. (attachment). *Moha* is as if a veil on right thinking, just like a shop-keeper, no originality—he just buys and sells. He has no fresh thinking. The genius brings original thinking to the world, There are different levels of mental vibrations—the *sattva*, the *rajas*, the *tamas* and then there are the *sattva* of the *sattva*, the *rajas* of the *sattva*, the *tamas* of the *sattva* and so on. The yogis can by their will get the desired object materialized, they can die at will, by will power tuberculosis is cured, incurable by medicine. One should have faith, strong faith, then alone effort will be effective. I broke my foot in New York. Doctor Coole took an X-ray photograph. He saw that bones had gone apart. He said, "You will have to go to the hospital." I did not. After that, I

walked briskly for four miles with the same broken foot and lectured for six hours. I had a previous appointment. The doctor was so surprised. He took another X-ray photo and found the bones had joined. Then he said, "Had you been a Christian scientist, you would have become immortal." Once I willingly succumbed to fever. I also had bronchitis, dysentery too. But these diseases had no effect on me. I was in Rishikesh. I had brought straw and built myself a straw-hut and was living in it. I would sit down on a stone at the Ganga and lived on begging once a day. Ah ! How clear was the water of the Ganga ! and how many fish ! Then I would always deliberate : I am the atman. I am not the body. I can have no disease. I have neither birth nor death. Once I willed : Let there be fever, and I had fever. Once I was in Switzerland. I was wandering through the hills. One day, I willed : Let a stone fall from above and there it came ! And I hurt my foot by it. Thereafter, I was careful, never to wish for such things again.

"When the mind is purified whatever you desire it will happen. In other words, you have to identify with the Divine Mind, be one with the Universal Consciousness. This is simple Vedanta. Not something very big but not a simple thing either. What is the use of reading various scriptures ? Shankracharya has said,

वाग्वैखरी शब्दझरी शास्त्रव्याख्यानकौशलम् ।  
वैदुष्यं विदुषां तद्वद्भुक्तये न तु मुक्तये ॥

—Studying many holy books and then blurting them out, all this increases the desire for worldly enjoyment, does not liberate. Only the knowledge of the Self leads to liberation. Just say, "I am the atman—the pure, the enlightened, the free." Meditate over this and you will be liberated. The Paramahansa Deva used to say : "He who says, I am a sinner, becomes so." Did the Paramahansa Deva himself get educated or study the scriptures ? Yet what

an unfathomable knowledge ! Great pundits I saw, sitting at his feet with folded hands. What you will think will happen. The Paramahansa Deva thinking of himself as the son of the Universal Mother, actually became so. That is why the savants crouched like earth-worms in front of him. For God is the mine of all knowledge. The universal Mother used to speak seated in his throat. He used to say : The Mother is pushing heaps of jnana (towards me). Saint Francis of Assisi thinking constantly of the image of the Crucified Christ had developed the marks of nails on his hands and feet,—his hands and feet were perforated—यादृशी भावना यस्य सिद्धिर्भवति तादृशी ।—As is your thinking so is your success. Emerson says, “Thoughts are realities” —this is exactly so. Whatever thoughts you have within they will come out in the same language. Thoughts and language are closely related. Thakur used to say : When you have eaten radish you can only belch radish. St. John says in the first teaching of his Gospel : ‘the Word was God’ (1 : 1). It means that words are the component parts of the thought. First of all, the universe existed in the form of a word ideally in the mind of God, thereafter it manifested itself. That’s why ‘the Word was God.’ Your thinking is your own image. The Sanskrit word *vaka* has degenerated into vox, from it comes voice. From thoughts come the language.

“Just see the power of thoughts. Somebody keeps the company of sadhus, serves sadhus. Doing thus, the whole influence of sadhus, their mental attitude will permeate in the course of time. So, the Paramahansa Deva used to say : You will have to do nothing else. Just by coming here (to him) it will be done. Those only who used to visit him got influenced by his thought. For example, people like us—we who are a reflection of his thoughts. Whatever the capacity, whatever the shape, he will contain accordingly. He was the lord of infinite divine attitudes. I used to sit beside the Paramahansa Deva. Then a number

of questions would arise in my mind. They would get solved in the mind itself—there was no need of asking. The same thing happened with me in America. Those who lived near had their questions answered by themselves मनोहि जगतां कर्ता पुरुषः—The mind itself is the master-doer. Whatever you bring to the mind comes about. This body—you people are only dead bodies. It is the mind which makes you move. Bring the mind under your control. Pull it out of sense enjoyment and leave it at His lotus-feet. By practice, it is done, none-the-less it is difficult. That is why the purity of mind is indispensable. The mind will accompany you after death, the body will be left behind. When the mind is perfectly pure God is seen through it. If you can purify it in this very birth, you will not have to return. Otherwise, this coming and going will continue. Practise self-worship. The Paramahansa Deva used to worship himself, he used to worship his self by himself. We have seen, he himself used to offer flowers to his own head and fall into samadhi at once. There is no ringing of the gong there. I am the atman, pure, free—thinking this over, the mind becomes pure. In the end, one sees that this very pure mind is the pure atman. You read books. Do you think over what it means?—That is to be in the same level of thought with the writer, like wireless telegraphy? While reading a book, you come across a word you do not understand, In that case, if you think over the thought, you can understand the meaning. Previously, one used to listen from the lips of the guru, from the lips of the expert. Now the same is read in the book. Books give you suggestions. But you are to make it your own by practice. This is what is called tapasya—this attempt. Having been educated, prepare a mould first, form an ideal. Then whatever you read you will accept only after testing it with your ideal. Otherwise, reading gives opposite results. First fix upon your ideal and then read. Work. Everything will be useful. Otherwise, it will yield

opposite results. The Paramahansa Deva used to say : The patient was sitting up. The doctor when brought in made him lie down."

M. (To the bhaktas)—Oh, how beautiful all this talk ! He had asked me whether he should enrol as a member or not. I told him it would be a great opportunity. All this at no price. Had he to go to America how much would he have spent ? He had not to go there. Sitting here everything is being heard. What I say is that a college comprises all this. Is merely that one building the college ? Till He grants enough of renunciation what can one do ? This kind of holy discussion or humanitarian work is a hundred times better.

"For shame ! what are the householders holding on to ? These three or four persons, my sons and daughters, my family, mine and thine—thinking over this one gets bound in a small circle. Instead, to think of all as one's own, well how much nobler it is ! Those who see in this way have a magnanimous heart. That's why they are called *mahatmas* ; that is why humanitarian work is good. The ideal is God-realization ; the way is to call upon Him sitting in a solitary corner, secretly, longingly to cry for Him, saying, 'Reveal Thyself, O Lord.' But does one feel this longing every time ? No, because one has work within. One has known the ideal and the way. Now keeping them in reserve with an eye on them one should take to work. Men cannot do without work. Humanitarian work is good—it is helpful. All work is His—doing work with this thought in the mind one does not get bound by it. It is better to work for the ten family members than for oneself alone. It is better still to work for the welfare of many. But the best is to work for God, one can see God in one's body, one's family and the society—in all the three. One's own body is His temple, the family and the society too are His temple. He has become as

all these. Seeing God in all, one should work. This is what is called working with God in view. The work of our missions is based on this very foundation. By working for Him, one gets liberated from all the three. Otherwise, they become causes of bondage. Thakur used to say: "Work is better than no work." It is a great privilege to sit at his feet. What great fundamentals are discussed there! What a great experience! A stay of twenty five years in America, besides being an intimate disciple of Thakur. Talk though he may of a thousand other things, ultimately, he will have to come to Thakur. Just see. After saying so many things in his lecture, he concludes with the teaching of Thakur. The work of Thakur is like an aphorism and he is as if commentating on it. The commentators vary; everybody may not have the same opinions. But the aphorism remains. (To Jagabandhu) You should take down your notes keeping two things specially in mind. First, his personal experience and second the words of Thakur. Just see, how many scenes we had today. The breaking of the foot in America, fever in Rishikesh, the striking of the stone in Switzerland. Collecting all these, one can write a life in the end.

M. (To all)—So highly learned and see what he says! He says, "What is the use of knowing so many holy books? Himself he has read so many shastras. This coming out of his lips carries much value. Says he: "God is not in scriptures. Practice is the need. Practice, that is tapasya, to try to keep united with Him, unbroken like the flow of oil. Thakur's word: The notes of the musical instrument should be brought to the fingers. Those who desire to become savants will awaken from these words.

Calcutta, 1st September 1923 A.D.  
15th of Bhadra, 1330 (Bengali year)  
Saturday, the 7th Day of the Dark Fortnight

## THE DEVOTEE—A SOLDIER IN THE BATTLE-FIELD

## 1

M is seated in the western room of the first floor of the Morton School. The meditation is over. The room is full of bhaktas. He has asked for a lantern to be brought from the vernandah. He is getting ready to read from the 'Kathamrita. Mohan enters the room. As soon as he sees him, M says, "What happened in the Vedanta Society today? Let us hear." Mohan reads out. The subject : Dualism.

"In the dualism of Christianity, the relation between God and man is the same as between the king and his subjects, or the master and his servant. By doing God's favourite work there is eternal heaven and by doing the contrary work, eternal hell. God is pleased when His ten commandments are followed. This, the way.

"God creates the world out of nothing and it is a chance creation. He is the governor of the universe—it is like the potter and his pot or the carpenter and his chairs and table. Just as the creator and the created are different from each other, similarly God is different from the universe. He rules from a distance. He has a body. Adam had walked with Jehovah (God). Seventy persons, devotees, a special class had seen Him and had taken their meals with Him. God was pleased by the sacrifice of Noah. Moses had seen His back. Except for Hinduism and

Buddhism, almost all the religions of the world have accepted this creed of the Christians : Deeds, favourite and otherwise of God are respectively the cause of liberation and bondage.

“According to the dualism of the Hindus, the relationships between God and the jiva are of different kinds. These relationships are according to the different disposition of the devotees. Sometimes the devotee considers God as the source of mental peace. Sometimes he says, “Lord, I am Thy servant,” sometimes He is the friend of the devotee, his son or husband, sometimes again God is the mother, devotee, child—various relationships. Men have different sentiments. Whichever sentiment predominates it goes to establish the relationship. So long as one knows oneself to be the body, one would have to accept this relationship. The Hindus say, “God has created this world—from eternal matter. God, the efficient cause, *prakriti* the material cause, like the potter who is the efficient cause and clay the material cause of the pot. The world is not a chance creation, it is created by God’s will. The atman of the jiva is beginningless, endless and without birth and death. The Hindus say, “The world in the form of a current is beginningless, infinite, but for the jiva it is beginningless but with a finite end. With attainment of mukti there is no world for the jiva. But the Christians believe in the beginning of the creation. God assumes form according to the sentiment of the devotee—different forms : qualified with form, qualified without form, Kali, Durga, Shiva, Vishnu, Rama, Krishna and so on. There is God’s abode outside the world. Living with Him for eternity—this is what is called mukti according to dualism. To live with God in the same sphere, to be near Him, to be of the same form, to be endowed with His powers, are the different kinds of muktis accepted in the Hindu Dualism. And He is also the inner regulator of the jiva and the universe and also omnipresent.

“The Hindus accept the Theory of Creation at the end of every *kalpa*. From this point of view, they accept the beginning of creation but in the form of a current they do not accept it. The Christians don't accept it. The Hindus, on the other hand, believe that just as the banyan tree is indestructible in the form of a seed in spite of its destruction, that is to say that it survives in the seed even after its tree-form has been destroyed, in the same way, the totality of the individual souls merges in the prakriti, in the Maha-pralaya (the Great Dissolution). There is no destruction. In the new creation, old desires get attached to the souls again. In this way, the cycle of birth and death, creation and dissolution continues till the jiva attaining liberation goes to God.

“The Hindus say that mukti does not mean going to heaven as believed by the westerners. Mukti means liberation from the cycle of birth and death. When God has been realized one does not have to fall into this cycle. This mukti will be attained by all jivas sooner or later. That is its essential nature. According to the Hindu belief there is neither satan nor eternal hell. God does not reward or punish according to one's meritorious or sinful acts. He is not responsible for the sinful or meritorious acts, vice or virtue of the jiva. The Christians and the Muslims believe in all this. The Hindus say: The karmas of the jiva themselves give birth to their sins and meritorious acts. Accepting transmigration of soul, they say, if one has done virtuous deeds in the past life, the result in this life will be good, and bad deeds will bring suffering. Birth and future follow one's karmas. We ourselves create our own future. Man has just a little freedom. His own actions give good or bad results, not God. God is all love, all-good.

“The Hindus say: God is, as if it were, a hill of lodestone, the sadhus and holy men, as if, big pieces of that

hill. Service to them helps in the attainment of mukti. Sri Chaitanya granted mukti to Jagai and Madhai. Sri Ramakrishna having taken upon himself the sins of so many persons granted them mukti. These perfectly pure and powerful persons are like philosophers' stone—the sinners, by their touch having been liberated, have turned unto pure gold. By their contact, so many others are also receiving benefit.

“The Hindus call all living-beings as jivas. This jiva is composed of twenty-four elements, five organs of senses, five organs of action, five *pranas*, five subtle elements and the *manas*, the *buddhi*, the *chitta* and the *ahankara*. So long as it does not attain mukti they all live in the jiva. The jiva has an inexhaustible power to progress. By committing a sin once, he does not get eternal hell. On the other hand, by his effort, by doing virtuous deeds his next life is made better. According to the Hindu belief it is a special right and chance for the jiva.

“Research on comparative religions is necessary. It is necessary to know the fundamental principles of other religions. Thereby, one comes to know the good and bad points of one's own religion. Knowledge is a great power. The basic element of religion: the belief in the existence of God; without it, the character itself does not get formed. And without character, where is joy, where is peace? Behaving in a disorderly manner, the character does not get formed. Fixing an ideal (viz. God) march ahead. Thereby character will be formed. It is difficult to build character by the education given in schools and colleges these days. Make your own effort and you will succeed. In America, every school and college has a church attached to it. The Bible is taught regularly. Even if it is nothing special, it impresses the mind of the students with a high ideal.

“Without work nothing is achieved. Read little, practise

more. Whatever you have read or known about religion, make an effort to practise it in life. Simple living and high thinking—this is what is needed. Bookish knowledge is of no avail—take to work. You will attain great heights. ‘Just like the washerman’s factory—nothing his own, everything belongs to others,’ the Paramahansa Deva used to say this.

“The genuine seekers of religion are but a few these days. I went to the Paramahansa Deva at the age of sixteen with enquiries about religion. God, soul, world, and liberation—one must have clear ideas of all these. It is vain to shoot without fixing the target, so having determined it first you should take to work. You will notice that you will progress in no time. Pray: “O Lord, lead me on to the right path. Grant me knowledge and devotion.” The Paramahansa Deva used to say, “Ma, I want nothing else, grant me only pure devotion, and a constant unshakable faith. Selfishness, creature comfort—rank enemies. Give them up and say: “God, the Lord of Love, take me with you, make a man of me—a genuine man.”

M.—That’s why I ask every day to go there. How nice every word! How can you get these things in schools and colleges? What a great man—not only learned but also an intimate devotee. Just see, one has to come to Thakur at last after wandering hither and thither. What an impression he has imprinted! Nobody can forget it. But for the avatara none can fix this impression. It is not the job of a water snake. Did we recognize him? Only he himself recognized himself. By his grace, he has drawn us.

M goes upstairs to take his meals, the bhaktas are singing bhajans. Mani sings—“Set out, O traveller! pack up your luggage. You have to go far, far off.” With the arrival of M, he stops singing. At his bidding he sings the whole song and ends it. Now M is himself

singing :

“O Mother, of which strange region is this judgement of yours ?

I weep and wander from road to road. You do not give your darshan even for once.”

M. (To bhaktas)—A composition of Girish Babu. Without inspiration within can such a song come forth? Girish Babu was like a tiger before others. On the arrival of the bhaktas, on going there we used to see, isn't it—he was as if an ordinary boy. He had written the Chaitanya Chrita before he had met Thakur. It was through this that he won him—it was his offering at the worship.

M. (To a bhakta)—Thakur was lying ill in the Kashipore Garden house. One day he said : “This disease, torture of death. Even then I don't feel the desire to leave the body, lest you should roam about weeping from pillar to post afterwards.” Oh ! What a love for the bhaktas ! He was anxious all the time then how to make men of them—how they can attain Eternal Life.

“Those who had renounced their all for his sake, what a yearning they had ! I heard the other day, a man kept calling upon him in the Math throughout the night, sitting in the temple of the Mother, with the Ganga in front. A person has written from Kankhal : “We have not been able to see Thakur. Can we not see him now ?” What a yearning he has for him ! How distant the Himalayas ! Sitting there, he is entertaining such sentiments ! They have renounced for him their all—mother, father, brother, friend, all the pleasures of life. The sadhus, when they are living with others in the Math, carry on somehow. But when they are alone what they think can be understood only by those who have some imagination. How full of yearning they are for Him. They are ever calling on Him. Is their call within brackets, a casual hobby ? They have

realized that the body will not last. While living, all is in vain without gaining Him—न इह चेदवेदित् महती विनष्टि । —it will be a complete ruin if He is not realized in this life—this they have understood. That is why they are staking their life for it. They are calling on Him with their life, body and everything. He will certainly fulfil their desire. (To the Doctor) Thakur has given us so many treasures. Which ones to hold we cannot decide—like the blind basket-maker in a thicket of bamboos. Some sadhu gives a little of the holy ash and thereby cures one's disease or brings on a lot of money, what a great respect for him ! And He who has given the Life Eternal how much more His greatness ! He is ever busy granting eternal joy, eternal peace, to the bhaktas. 'Ask, and it shall be given you.....' (St. Matthew 7 : 7)

## 2

M is seated in the same room—the western room on the first floor. The bhaktas are on all the three sides, Shukalal, Doctor, Vinay, Manoranjana and Shachi have arrived. Jiten the Younger, Nalinees the Younger, Amrit and Yogen enter almost together. Mohan has come from the Vedanta Society. It is 8.30 p.m. M asks him to read out his notes. The topic of today is 'Qualified Monism.' The Society meets from 5.30 to 8.0 p.m. Attendance, some eighty persons.

Swami Abhedananda (to the audience)—In qualified monism, God is Virat (all pervading)—everything is within Him—He is both intra-cosmic and extra-cosmic. His body is the causal frame of this physical world. He has unlimited sense organs. He sees simultaneously through the eyes of us all. When you are able to understand this you will be able to form the idea of universality. You think that you are seeing, you are hearing. But in reality it is He who is doing all this. His breath is wind, His mind is the sum total of all minds. His intelligence is also

boundless. Every living-being is a separate world, just think of all living-beings like this and it becomes infinite. In other words, since the little mind of the man cannot think of it correctly, one calls it infinite—it cannot be comprehended. Again God is the inner soul of them all. He is both the efficient cause and the material cause. He is not the governor. 'I' taken to infinity is God.

"The causal frame of the external world has been called the *virata*. He has also been called causal force or prakriti (matter). Matter and force are inseparable. Their causal state is prakriti, energy. It is this which is called in Latin procreatrix or creative energy. The causal state of this energy can be inferred. The cause can be inferred by 'seeing the effect'. The existence of the causal energy can be understood from the energy of the effect. The fan moves, it radiates light and heat. Seeing this resultant energy one has to accept, one feels that it has also a causal energy. The banyan tree has its seed and the seed also has the banyan tree within it. The seed is no bigger than a grain of mustard on my palm. Just see what a big banyan tree comes out of it. Go to Shivapur and see the Botanical Gardens. A single banyan tree has a hundred and fifty trunks. All these lay within that tiny seed—in an unmanifested form. Cause and effect are the different aspects of the same Shakti. This is the philosophy of Kapil Muni, the author of the Sankhya School of philosophy. The western scientists could not understand till the middle of the last century this Sankhya aphorism—नास्तो सद्भावः न—न (no, not), असतोः (from non-existence), सद्भावः (existence). They used to say "Out of nothing comes something". Disappearance of some thing was meant by them as annihilation.

"The Englishmen are excelling you. Till the 17th century you were ahead of them, now you cannot overtake them. In their country, every rich man has a private laboratory in his house where quite some youngmen learn. You have

no ambition. Yours is only to serve as a slave, put up with insults, work as a clerk or at the most to be a lawyer—this your ambition. The westerners have the ambition to conquer the whole world. Wake up your self-confidence. Have faith in yourself, you will also be able to conquer the world. You have to think: We are His parts, our mind is a portion of His mind. Give up inertia, say: I am His child, infinitely strong. And study the ancient scriptures. Equipped with this faith, you will conquer the world. The conservation of energy—our rishis had discovered it. Now, they (the westerners have understood all this they have become rishis, big rishis. What are you doing? Having married at an early age, you are just shouting, "O my stomach, O my stomach!"

"This is but one vital force, '*gachhe, machhe, masha machhite*'—in trees and fishes, in insects and mosquitoes—it is there inside all. It is called life. Living being, that is God. He alone is living; we are only in His body. That is why it appears that we are living.

"In the Mahapralay, the Great Dissolution, you were lying unmanifested, lying in the cause—this is called involution. Then in the new kalpa\*, you were let off. Then, all started doing the work they had been doing. This is called evolution. He is an endless bonfire, we are all His sparklings. Can you live without God? You think you are doing everything. That is not so. Without him, you can do nothing. I am doing everything—this feeling is ajnana. You are doing everything. I am only an instrument—this is called jnana. Give up this ignorance from today. Say, I am His part. This will bring strength to the mind. You will be as powerful as He, now you have such little power. Bonfire and sparkling—but they both

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Kalpa\* A day and night of Brahma, equivalent to 432 million years of the mortals.

have the same qualities. A sparkling can set the whole world ablaze.

“What does infinite mean? It is that He is immanent, as well as transcendent. Your soul resides within your body as well as outside. With self-knowledge it is understood that He is both within and without, everywhere He. According to Vashistadvaita (Qualified Monism) the jiva is a part and God the whole. The whole and the part—an identity in difference.

“The theory of physiology, was not this before?—it was somewhat like this. Now, it has advanced much farther. You need to know all this. The form means limitation by time and space. The unlimited dimension of the akasha becomes limited as soon as the walls of a house are raised. That is why your body cannot be His body, when the walls have been built. The walls in the form of my and mine have created your new limited akasha of the body. It has its beginning and end. It is not the case with God’s body. Break asunder this little world of the body, this akasha of the house. Be one with Him.

“Man’s relation to God, says Christ, is like the grapes to the vine. It is like the tree and its branches. The tree is greater than the branches. So Christ says: My father is greater than myself. This is what is called Qualified Monism—the relation of the part with the whole. He is the body of our body, the breath of our breath, the mind of our mind. We are contained within Him—His portions, His children.

M. (To Mohan)—In a way, he has explained the principle of prakriti. Others again will not accept it. There are so many theories. That is why Thakur would say: “Ma, so much of subtleties, I do not want to know even. Grant me pure devotion at Your lotus-feet.” Even so, it is good to have heard about it if only once.

He used to say : Who knows, Bapu ! the name of your village and so on. I am the Brahmin of Virbhuma." (Laughter) I am His son, knowing this is enough. Knowingly I am practising tapasya, one has to try for that. This is the real thing.

M. (To the bhakta)—Why don't you all go ? It is so near. Where does one get such a chance ? Those who will teach humanity need to know so many things. Thakur used to say : "To kill others, you need sword and shield. Your own life you can take even by a nail-knife." Varied knowledge, special weapon.

'Your own life' that is, the false ego, the unripe I ; with this I-ness gone all botheration ends. (To Mohan) I feel a desire to see who is calling on God with which sentiments in the city of Calcutta, if only I could see this scene all at once. But by organising an agency, one can get all the news. By seeing the bhakta the mind is inspired with God. To the extent one can live with God, only to that extent our life is real. Who is he who lives, who lives twenty four hours with Him ? I have seen Paramahansa Deva, uttering Ma, Ma, day and night, sometimes merged in samadhi—internally becoming one with the Universal Mother. Now he sees Her within, now without. That is why he would say : The garden is made of wax, the house of wax, the temple, all of wax, inside and outside it is all wax. This is the state of half-consciousness. And in his conscious state he sees : Ma is Herself playing in the form of the world, in different forms. It was only then that he would call out Ma, Ma. And he would pray : Mother, Do not delude me by your world-enchanting Maya." Blessed indeed are we who have seen him. Those who believe without seeing him are twice blessed."

2nd September 1923.

Today, the Festival of Nanda. Doctor, Vinay, Jagabandhu and other bhaktas were sent, the previous night, to

the Math. Today in the evening the bhaktas have gathered near M. M is seated in a chair in the western room of the first floor, the bhaktas are on benches. He asks a bhakta, "Was that gentleman of the B.N. Railway there at night?" (Laughing, to the bhaktas) He is about 26. He lives in Entally, He came here last evening. I told him, "To-night the Janma-Ashtami worship is being performed in the Math. Why not go there with them?" The bhaktas were going then. At first he was unwilling to go, so I said, "Just see, sadhus are going there, these white robed sadhus. There are many good gerua-robed sadhus there." He agreed then. He has sanskaras, otherwise how could he spend the night with sadhus? Blessed are these people! Spending the night on the bank of the Ganga in the company of those who have renounced their all, witnessing the worship and besides hearing the Bhagavata, how very lucky! A voice from above had announced: The Lord will come in the eighth confinement (of Devaki) and will kill Kansa. Did He kill Kansa with the human feelings of jealousy and hatred? No, not that. How can it be helped? He removed him to save His world-play, just like a mother who removes a restless child. It is only when the matters go to extremes that He does so. Just as good has an extreme, the evil has also an extreme. Kansa, Shishupal, Ravana—they had reached the last limits of evil—enemical to God they insulted the bhaktas, so the Mother removed them. And there is an end to goodness too. Thakur was liberating all, granting them everlasting peace and happiness—giving them life eternal, so him too Mother removed. Because it was harming Her world-play. By granting Brahman-jnana to all, the world cannot last. That is why he said before giving up the body, "I, a fool, am speaking out everything. That is why Mother is carrying me away. Had the body lasted a few days more, a few more would have attained awakening." He said so as a bhakta for the instruction of the bhaktas. From this incident it becomes

clear that human planning does not last ultimately—it goes on only when it is subordinated to the divine plan. He said so as a bhakta and then left as God. The work for which he had taken up a body was finished, so he departed. He is a bhakta and He is Bhagavan—he is both in one. He Himself is Kansa and Ravana. For the sake of leela, all this happens. Extremes do not work, so the middle path. By being midway between good and evil does this world run. When there is interference in this, He carries away or departs. In God, in the avatara there is no jealousy—all love—the never-ending love of the Mother.”

M. (To Vinay)—Who performed the puja? Who read the Bhagavata?

Vinay—Shashadhar Maharaj was the priest and Ananga Maharaj the assisting priest. He also read the Bhagavata.

M.— One should go to the Math on such occasions. Then the sadhus are seen in their usual mood. Blessed are those who have spent the night there—they had the benefit of tapasya of many years in one night. Company of what kind of sadhus?—Of those who have renounced their all—they want nothing, nothing but God. All this work they do is only to attain Him, at the command of the guru. This is not their real self. Their real self is their yearning self—doing whatever they are asked to do—the way the mother does for her children—offering sacrifice at Taraknath Temple, taking a vow of worship at the Kalighat Temple—doing everything she is asked to do. They should be seen when performing dyhana, japa and puja. These precious things He himself has arranged—this Math, these sadhus. But people are not taking advantage of them. Besides, what perfected souls reside in the Math! And there are the children of Thakur there, some of them. Aren't they? This is the case of having eyes but seeing not, of having ears but hearing not.

By this time, many bhaktas have assembled. Shukalal, Doctor, Jiten the Elder, Jiten the Younger and Virinchi have arrived. Shachi, Shanti and Yogen are already seated there. Then arrive Mani, Amrita, Sudhir Amulya the Elder and Manoranjana. As bhaktas were arriving he was repeating the same : Blessed are those who have spent the last night in the Math in the company of sadhus and heard the Bhagavata.

M. (To Jiten the Younger)—What happened today in the Nanda Festival in the Math ?

Jiten the Younger—They were sprinkling yellow coloured water on each other ; the sadhus were singing the kirtan : 'Who is walking on the bank of the Surdhuni, uttering the name of Hari ? It seems it is Nitai ; the bestower of love has come.'

M.—Thakur used to dance singing this very song.

What is M thinking ? However he started conversing again.

M. (To Jiten the Elder)—A bhakta went to Kankurgachhi. He was to go to the Math this morning. As he had pain in his legs he could not go. He kept sleeping, snoring till late in the morning. Had he gone there he could have witnessed all these happy festivities. But he had not that good luck. Because of the pain in his legs he did not go to such a holy place, how unfortunate ! Being so feeble will not do. Those who are to realise God are like soldiers in a battle-field, they have to be so. One has had fever, or has kept awake at night—what avails such calculation ? The commander has given the order : "March", and the soldiers start at once. All fever, ailments vanish. Perhaps it is training. He pays no heed. He marches on and on. 'Heroes ! The country has

fallen to the enemy; woman, children and old men are in his hands, the mother-land will be enslaved. March, march forward, Brave men!’ Hearing these soul lifting words, the fever takes to wings.

M. (To Shukalal)—That is why the rishis have spoken aloud : नायात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः—The weak cannot attain the Lord. Swamiji (Vivekananda) used to say : अशुद्रं हृदयदीर्घ्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप । (Gita 2: 3)—O the Tormentors of the enemies! Giving up your mean weakness of the heart stand erect. Are such songs meant just to be sung? I have awakened, why should I sleep any more? I am awake in the yoga, in the yajna. These things should be thought over, one should try to practise. Hearing the song from Thakur, such a great Vedantist, Totapuri the naked had begun to weep: ‘O Jiva, go to the battlefield in battle array. Death has entered your house.’ He was hearing it and with tears in his eyes, he was saying, “Oh! What is this?” Such a big man but just by listening to the tune his eyes get filled with tears. No understanding of the meaning, even then.

M. (To the bhaktas)—When one goes to see one’s mother in the village after two years does one miss the train? But it happens when one does for the company of the sadhus—the leg begins to pain—the company that gives the eternal life. This mother looks after the physical body only and the other one not only the body but also the mind and the soul—how can Her child gain life eternal, this is Her effort. But who listens? Idleness! (Excitedly) It will not do to be weak. (To a person) The son takes wine, visits a prostitute but the mother says, “Let it be. Men do such things.” This mother sees only whether he is alive or not. Wherever he may be, she gets his news, that’s all. If one has so much of love, so much of attraction for this mother, then for the Mother of the Universe, the Eternal Mother how much more of love there should be?

M. (To all)—A bhakta was sitting with Thakur. At that time, he was (showing with his finger) just like this—dried up like wood. Shattered by grief he would depart, the bhakta had his head bent down. Seeing this he at once said excitedly, "What is this? How can you go on in this way? Overcome your weakness." Jesus said: Those, who look back to see the plough, will not be my companions. Those who are bound down with the ties of affection for their kith and kin will also not be able to tread the path with me. Those who are the beloved of God have no place to lay their head—'....The Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.' (St. Matthew 8 : 20)

"You will have to be the soldier of the battle-field. Aching legs, headache—all these are there, of course. Just see, Shashadhar kept awake throughout the night to carry out worship, performed the early morning-aarti and then offered worship in the day—continuous work. Without doing so, there is little chance."

M is silent.

The Bhakta—Sir, did Thakur talk only of ritualistic worship?

M.—Ritualistic worship is necessary, but said he: Worship is performed mentally too. He said, "I have worshipped this (the devotee within) mentally with flowers and sandal paste."

Jiten the Younger—Ananga Maharaj enquired: What happened there yesterday at Master Mahashay's? I talked of the reading from the Bhagavata. He said, "Yesterday was the birth anniversary of Yogamaya, so we read out the Chandi also." Basant Maharaj said, "Ask him to get the Chandi read there too."

M.—They distinguish between 'here and there.' But all places are the same. Only there are walls in between.

Break them and all is one. What Ananga is reading there is also being done here. Everything is happening at the same place with the same object in view.

M. (To Vinay)—Well, Vinay Babu, do please enquire after Sukhendu Babu. He hasn't been coming so long. Thakur used to say : 'You have fallen into the hands of the Mughal. You will have to eat with him.' (Laughter) Why did you get registered in the hospital ?

M. (To all)—The best physician forces the patient to take medicine, he does not go away merely with the fees of his visit. When the bhaktas did not visit him he would send word to their homes or sometimes even go there himself. Reaching there he would say, "You have not been coming for so long. How worried I feel"—just as the ordinary man does usually. Could the bhaktas understand then ? That is why they would not care, would not come but he was mad for them. What a love is needed to do so, how dear must one be thought for doing so ? That is the reason he is called the Ocean of Grace without Reason. Why did he do so ? He knew, didn't he, that they were to do his work, which would benefit them and also the world. He left his unparalleled wealth to them. They are again giving it away to others. Thus it is handed down from one to the other. So one has to say—Bhagawana has a greater care for His bhaktas. Moreover, how much thought can the bhakta give Him ? Once this loving relationship has been impressed on the heart, it is done. Keep holding on to Him and sing with joy—

'The bewitching flute of Shyam is ringing. Hearing the sweet notes of the flute, the body is so cooled.

Let me go to the forest where it is being played. I have no other use for this wretched life.

I shall fulfil my hope, my mind's desire if only I could live as the dust-particle of the foot of Shyam.

This bird has started signing on the 5th note this song and the wind stands listening to its strains.

At the mention of whose name the Yamuna begins to flow upward, and the cow begins to bellow hamba—the bewitching flute of that Shyam is being played.

Calcutta

4th September, 1923

18th of Bhadra, 1330 (Bengali Year)

Tuesday.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S MESSAGE—THE  
HOLY FORMULA FOR WORLD-UNITY

Morton School. The western room on the first floor. Autumn. M is seated with the bhaktas, in a chair, facing the east. The bhaktas are on the benches. It is 8.15 p.m. Shukalal, Jiten the Younger, Mani, Manindra, Yogen and the child Khoka are seated. Doctor, Vinay, Viren, Ramni and Manoranjana have also come. There are many other bhaktas too. Shachi and Jagabandhu have returned from the Vedanta Society. Manindra is singing one or two snatches of songs. Idea : Without subjugating lust and anger it is impossible to realize God. Moreover, without realizing God, it is not possible to completely overcome them. If you wish to realize Him, seek refuge in Him.

Jiten the Elder and Virinchi Kaviraj enter.

M. (To Jiten the Elder)—But Thakur spoke about this lust to a bhakta : “On taking up a body, a little bit of lust remains. No harm in it.” The bhakta submitted to him, “No sir, I want that by which it goes off completely” Thakur replied, “Is that possible ? Even so, it is possible when God has been seen.” One’s own effort is also necessary. One should practise as he has advised. As for example he has said, “On marrying when a child or two have been born one should not sleep in the same bed with the wife, nor should the body touch her body. And those who have not married should not marry at all. One should try to give the whole of the mind to Him. Nothing is possible in a day. Keep on trying.” Making

Him your refuge it comes about. He wants us to make effort. When he sees us making effort His grace dawns. He comes personally and lifts, holding one's hand, just as the mother lifts when the child has fallen down and is crying. This is what He likes to see — that the bhaktas are making effort. Say to Him weeping, "Father, I am unable to do any more. Please hold my hand." When you ask Him with a yearning in your heart, He does it. Sometimes He does so even unasked. Such is a very exceptional case. Ordinarily, He wants effort. Hence it is said in the Gita, go on practising. Practice and dispassion. Dispassion, that is love for God, seeking refuge in Him, weeping and praying. This is the positive meaning of dispassion. He most surely does it when He is asked with a yearning heart. He did it in the case of that bhakta.

Now the notes from the lecture of Abhedananda are being read. Jagabandhu is reading :—Kali Maharaj (Swami Abhedananda) said today : A famous western professor of psychology has said, "Every sensation keeps an impression in the mind in sub-conscious regions. The same is the belief of Sir Walter Hamilton. The yogis say that our desires are a reflection of those accumulated impressions. These impressions acted upon produce an action. Each desire for worldly pleasure leaves an impression on the mind stuff. Together they form a *sanskara*. A desire rises, it is satisfied. This brings peace for a while. Then arises another desire, it is also satisfied and then again comes peace. This process goes on uninterrupted from birth to birth. After God, the Image of Peace, has been seen this process comes to an end. Then there is nothing but peace. The peace that is found in the fulfilment of desires has its reverse as tension. In the eyes of the yogis, therefore, both are tensions. To them, God is the only substratum of peace. The yogi, that is one who has attained self-control, whose mind is his slave.

The worldly is he who has not achieved this, he who is the slave of his mind. Sadhana, that is to repeatedly fix the mind on one thing. By practice, gradually, the mind is subjugated.

“Some persons have their minds drawn towards God from their very childhood—for example, the Paramahansa Deva, Vivekananda, we. We are born with the good sanskaras of our previous births, that is the reason. You yourself and your father and mother, all of you have been thinking since your childhood : We shall get married, have children, run a home, win name and fame. You have grown with these sentiments. Even now you are thinking the same ; in the next life you will do the same. Give up this thinking. Learn to think differently from now. Start practice—in this very life or in the next o will succeed. Always think over this: Every enjoyment leaves an impression in the mind. The collection of such impressions is called sanskara. This sanskara repeats itself again and again and at last forms our habits. These habits again will go with us after death, and are the cause of our cycles of deaths and births. This goes on increasing, it never ends. If you think over this daily, the mind will become alert. This done you will no longer be able to do the work which brings bondage.

“The westerners do not accept this. They do not believe in previous births—that is why they don't accept the fruit of action. The Sufis accept it, also the Theosophists. The Neo-science has also started accepting it. A father has five sons—one of them is a sadhu. How can this be explained without accepting the theory of transmigration ? If you say, it is God's will then why did it not happen in the case of another. His will, His grace, these are like the light of the sun—it falls equally, both on the sadhu and the murderer. By accepting the fruit of action, you get its explanation. The Englishmen say, Luther also says so : “Man is a beast of burden. Some-

times God drives him, sometimes Satan. They explain errors, sin and the rest through Satan." Our doctrine is more rational and scientific than this one. Many Englishmen and Americans have now started accepting our theory. As Christianity is unable to explain all these basic problems, many are giving up this faith. They say: 'God was created by God, evil by Satan.'

"Sin, illusion, the snare of fascination, they are all due to previous practice. These faults are self-made—think over this. Don't lay the blame on mother, father or God. By taking them upon oneself the effort to get rid of them soon begins. The Shastra says this—You yourself are responsible for yourself. Take the responsibility of sin and virtue upon your own self.

"Some again argue to explain the varieties of nature of men—good and evil, by heredity or environments or both. But the same objection comes again. If it is true, then why do the five sons of the same parents born, brought up and educated under the same conditions and environments differ in their characters? So this explanation is unsatisfactory. Therefore, the law of karma is the best instrument to explain it.

"There is a theory, it goes to explain the varieties of the good and evil human character with reference to heredity and environments. Then the old objection rises—that if the good and bad qualities of family and environment have such a power why then the five children of the same parents are so different from each other. They have all had their birth, bringing up and education through the same parents, under the same conditions and environment. That is why their theory is not tenable, and so the theory of karma or that of transmigration is acceptable. The doctrine of sanskaras is capable of dispelling this doubt easily.

"If suffering is to be got rid of, birth and death will have to be done away with. If that is to be achieved, self-restraint and character-building are necessary. For that, sense enjoyment has to be given up. You may derive satisfaction from bhoga—from the external objects—but it is short-lived. After a while pain will reappear. The peace derived from sense enjoyment is called tamasic. The rishis, the yogis say for these very reasons that with bhogas there is no cessation to bhoga. The more ghee you pour on the fire the more it will burn.

"If you want peace, make an effort and call on Him, you will surely get it. Without his own effort, nobody gets peace. Deliberate and act. We are always discriminating—God is real, world unreal, sense enjoyment unreal. Sitting in the solitude of the forest and again sitting in the midst of people we are thinking the same. This is the only path to peace. Vivekananda, Paramahansa Deva, Gauranga, Jesus, Buddha, all deliberated over this. They all arrived at the same conclusion.

"The education you are getting, who gives that ? Those who have never been in the vicinity of peace. If you do not wish to marry, the doctor would advise marriage. The parents would insist too. They only know this ashrama, have no idea of the higher ones. Even a eunuch would say, "Marry". Marrying, producing children, earning money—there is no peace in these. You see their result before your very eyes.

"Whatever you do, friend, do it taking refuge in the Lord. Otherwise there is no peace of mind. Wife, son or daughter, wealth and possessions, name and fame, nothing can give you peace. The wealthy has no peace. Wealth increases sense enjoyments. The ideal is God—holding fast to Him live in the world, earn money, you will not be bound by it, the poison that kills will bestow life. Gradually you will be able to gain supreme peace.

"The Paramahansa Deva was called mad by the people as he had married but never had sex relation with his wife. Vivekananda was advised by the doctor. "Marry or you will lose your head." They called us mad too. The doctors say, "Without marriage there will be disease and the life will be spent all alone in silence and go waste." Such are these doctors ! These people are your advisers. They are incapable of seeing beyond this body. This body will not last—this they have forgotten. The yogis, on the other hand, see two more bodies within this outer one—the subtle and the causal. By following the advice of such advisers what will be the condition, do you know ? अन्धेन नीयमाना ययान्वाः—The blind leading the blind and both falling into the well, this will be the condition. The blind man and his leader will both lose their lives by falling into a well. The university, too, cannot impart the right education. Gathering some informations is not called education. This does not build the character. The education for building up character will be practical. The head and hand will work together. Then only education will be life-giving.

"Say such spiritual matter to an unrestrained, lustful, pleasure hungry individual, he would say, you have gone mad. He has no idea that above sense enjoyment also there is something good. He has never heard of the eternal peace and the supreme bliss. So he says, 'mad'. The thirst for pleasure leads to lust, anger, greed, brings about a desire for name and fame, gives birth to honour and dishonour, jealousy for others, fortune, envy, and hatred. Analyse the mind and see, which feelings are uppermost. Sitting in solitude, try to subjugate them, practise. Worldly people can also attain jnana by this sort of deliberation and practice and turn this world into a house of happiness. Is the world without God ? Fix your mind on God and do your worldly duties.

"I have seen—whether you are sitting in a cave, a jungle, a forest or again you are in a kingly palace, there is peace everywhere. Going to Tibet, I noticed the same peace, the same by living in America, Canada and Europe. Everywhere there is peace. So the Paramahansa Deva said : 'He who has it here has it also there. He who has not here has not there.' He said : 'Going to Vrindabana I saw the same tamarind trees, the same everything, so my Dakshineswar is preferable.' Thereafter he did not go anywhere. When peace is established within, there is peace wherever you may live. That I have come here and living now in this country after such a long time, there is peace in it too. I have gone round the whole world and seen the same—peace everywhere.

"You will also get the same peace. Try to conquer your mind. Engage yourself in work. Gradually special instruction will be given. Let me see, you practise half an hour in the morning and half an hour in the evening. At bed-time at night, think over all these matters and sleep. The mind is so restless. To subjugate it you have to labour hard. Sri Krishna said this to Arjuna : Subjugate the mind by practice and renunciation. Doing a little every day, you will see at the end that much has been done. Persevere—don't talk and take to work—practice and prayer. Go into solitude at times and sit alone. Daily, at the time of practice, sit alone. Sitting in the company of persons you will be coloured by them. The Hindus, in the past used to impart this education of practice from the very childhood. The small boy used to be initiated to the Gayatri—a child of five or seven. They would make him sit and practise thrice a day. Now they have forgotten it ; who would get it done ? The father does not know, he has given up the practice. The school and the college do not give this instruction either. So you should sit down and start practice again. Com-

pany is colour. Sadhu, thief, drunkard, in whichever company you live, all the tendencies will penetrate into you. The Paramahansa Deva used to say : The mind is as it were, a laundered cloth—red, black, white, yellow, in whichever colour you dye it, it will be that. Sleep alone, then try to subjugate the mind. Mend your mind. Do not be a cheat. Let your mouth and mind be one. You want self-rule, it will also come. Attainment of self-rule is the last thing. First prepare your mind. Character is the fundamental thing. Only this will go with you from life to life. Name and fame, wife and son, money and wealth will be left behind. Build character—this precious thing.”

## 2

Question—Why did God create vice and virtue ?

Answer—He did not. We have done it. We Hindus are the creators of vice and virtue. This is my personal belief. It is by one's own sanskaras, good and bad that vice and virtue come into being. The work done in ignorance, that which keeps away from God, that is sin. That which brings near God is virtue.

“According to the Evolution Theory, the first stage is that of minerals, then of trees, animals, men, successively. The man has first ignorance, thereafter he gets knowledge. Ultimately divinity, man-God. What was the Buddha in his previous births, all this is found in the Jataka tales. Animal, bird and any number of other states he went through before he became the Enlightened One. Sri Krishna has said, “I am born many a time.” Similarly, as one goes on, birth after birth, in the end one becomes paramahansadeva. On becoming a paramahansa one has touched ‘the target in the game of hide and seek’. His play can no longer go on. His work is finished, now he is God himself. Dog, cat, all living beings will have to attain

godhood one day in this way. This is called *mukti*, this is what is named attainment of self-rule."

M.—In today's talk, he has nicely dwelt upon practice. Practice means to think of the same one thing again and again. This very thing is called *tapasya*. The mind is drawn towards worldly pleasures and enjoyments like a restless child. To bring it back home and settle it down, sometimes by love, sometimes by teaching, sometimes by beating, the way mothers do to the children. Home, that means His lotus-feet. This is beautiful indeed ! And prayer too. Both of these are also high concepts. By practising them, one will be saved. One should pray : God, grant me right thinking, keep the mind at thy lotus-feet. Thakur used to say, "Don't enchant me with your world-bewitching *maya*." And the company of the holy too. Practice, prayer and holy company—these are priceless words. Company colours the man, so the need of holy company. By bad company, how low Bharata had gone down ! It is rising again.

M. (To all)—Before the coming of Thakur, how 'lower' our ideal had become ! Everybody had begun to think that to be westernized was the aim of life. What a great man was Vidyasagar ! Even he fell into bad company. But then it was not his fault. Company must have its effect—the company, the environment he lived in—it was its fault. The Europeans had then newly arrived in India. Everybody presumed that their everything was good. Well, what a downfall the country had ! Now again it is rising. The *Charitavali* and the *Akhyamananjari* of Vidyasagar are full of these very ideas. Lives of the Englishmen have been translated into Bengali in that book. What does it contain ? This, isn't it, so and so was very poor. He studied with great hardships, then he became famous and was remembered by all. There is the Rover's life. He was very poor. He had no money or his education. He went to the forest and began kil-

ling squirrels. So much blood-shed, then taking the hide of these squirrels, selling them in the bazar, he began to pay for his education with that money. Pooh ! What an ideal these stories hold, these extremely relentless stories ! And what did Thakur say ? "I beat the worldly honours with a broom." They are after name and fame—this, their ideal. But he beats them with a broom. "Mean things they are all", said he. The ideal is God-realization. What else have the westerners to give by way of an ideal ? The ambition of their lives is socialism or politics. Cinema, theatre, novel, dinner, dress, toilet—they are living with these things. And sitting with girls, singing and playing, the girls whose contact turns a person worldly, conversing, singing and playing with such girls. This is what is their ideal. The lads of our country have also begun doing the same. Seeing and hearing such things result in whetting the desire for worldly life. The higher ambition—that is God-realization they are forgetting. The science of their country, it is good, but not knowing its application, it is turning them into bhogis. And by its use they exploit other peoples, the weaker ones. But the Aim of knowledge : gradually and ultimately to realize God, the Essence of knowledge. But where is it being practised ? We are going in the opposite direction. If a blind man leads a blind man, it is the ruin of both. The rishis knew that God-realization is the aim of life. That is why, they have built this country with that aim in view. India had fallen, it is rising again. None will be able to stop it. It will win an unrivalled place in the world. Thakur has come just for this. That's why he said : Faith in the word of the guru. Guru, that is God, avatara, rishi—his word. On listening to the word of the guru, this fall will also cease, fear will also vanish.

M is silent. After sometime he resumes :

M. (To Viren)—What are the worldly living with ? 'Feeders', objects of enjoyment all around. Even if the mind is quietened for a while with difficulty, it is immediately assailed by stimuli from all sides. Thakur therefore said : That which contains water, near to it must be flowing a stream or the like. From it, water keeps oozing into the other. Of the two pits in the field one contains water, the other does not. Seeing this, he had said this. This is the condition of the worldly. Immediately, it dries a little, worldly desires flow in. And they had their feed along with it. So one should first 'make butter,' by going into solitude. By performing tapasya by understanding the aim—the aim of life is God-realization—live in the household. Thus, it will not entail much harm.

M. (To Virinchi)—Did we have an easy awakening ? Just see what a catastrophe has befallen Japan. Five lacs of people have lost their lives outright. Why does He get these things done—For our teaching. How much does the worldly man sorrow for a son, but here so many persons have died together. It is much bigger a catastrophe than that of the orphanage. There forty three children lost their lives. In Japan, what a big calamity compared even to this ! He is warning us that there is a volcano below. People do not accept, so destruction takes place. How many times has it happened in Japan in the same manner ! Even so, do people listen ? Do they ever realize ? Adharsen was warned against riding a horse by Thakur, when for the first time he fell from the horse, but he did not listen. He fell a second time and died. Thakur said then : 'Mother does not say again and again.' At times she warns. Unless one wakes up, death is sure.

Calcutta, 5th September 1923 A.D.  
19th of Bhadra 1330 (Bengali Year)  
Wednesday.

The Morton School. The western room of the first floor. Autumn, 7.30 in the evening. M is seated with the bhaktas. The evening meditation followed by songs is over. M is now reading out the picturesque account of the lila of Thakur from the Kathamrita to the devotees.

M reads—"Sri Ramakrishna, after the mid-day meals, is resting in the room with the bhaktas, in Dakshineswar. Then comes Jnana Babu. He is an M.A., employed in Government service. He is thinking whether to marry a second time or not, his first wife is dead.

"Ramakrishna (seeing Jnana)—Hello, what a sudden awakening of *jnana*.....! (Laughing) you bring Jnana, how is it that you are ajnana (ignorant)? O, I understand, where there is *jnana*, there is also ajnana. Vasishtha Deva, though such a *jnani*, also wept at the death of his son. You go beyond *jnana* and ajnana..(To Pandit Shashadhar) I see—dogmatic, only dry intellectual knowledge he had. Only dry knowledge.—It is like the fountain of fireworks, rising up with a sudden hiss sparkling for a moment, and dropping down in the twinkling of an eye."

M. (To the bhaktas)—This is the fourth picture. The other three have gone before this. Thakur says, "You being Jnana, how is it that you are ajnana?" That is, on marrying once you have seen that there is more pain in it than pleasure. You are sad at the passing away of your first wife, yet knowingly you are trying to enter it (household) again. That is why Thakur said this, suggesting indirectly that he should not marry again. The mind which is to be given to His lotus-feet will be spent on other matters. He is encouraging him, at the same time he is exposing his defects. His encouragement was—he has good *sanskara*, otherwise he could not have Thakur's *darshana*. So, he is saying: "You are Jnana." And

also 'ajnana'—meaning thereby that he is entering the household again by remarrying. Sanskaras are very powerful, dragging him. And bookish knowledge, intellectual knowledge—this is weak. This also he is telling referring to Shashadhar. The fountain of firework with a sudden hiss means that there is not much strength within. The flow of knowledge is not uniform. Reason?—This knowledge is derived from books. The knowledge which comes from God is that which He himself supplies constantly. That's why it is not dry—and unending. It is, as if it were, a long sparkling fountain—it does not hiss or die down—it does not go off the beat in talks or in behaviour—it is well reinforced. That is why it is continuous jnana. This is called the state of a *vijnani*—it is attained after the supreme realization of Brahman. Chaitanya Deva and Thakur had this very state.

M. (To a bhakta)—Describe briefly the first three scenes please.

The Bhakta—The first scene :—The Shrine of Thakur in Dakshineswar. After the evening prayers, he says, He who thinks constantly on God does not need any prayer. In Rishikesh, a sadhu would stand near a spring and repeat the whole day, "Ah, well done!"

The second picture :—Thakur is returning to his room from the Panchavati. New clouds rising in the sky behind Thakur—their reflection falling in the Ganga—the clouds are, as if, the back-ground.

The third:—The sitting room of Balaram. He is saying to Balaram's father, "He who has brought about a synthesis is the real man."

M. (To the bhaktas)—There are three types of meditations—concentrating over the form, on the lila, and on a great saying. These scenes constitute concentration on the lila accompanied by form as well as saying. It is easy

this way. (Laughing). The Vaishnavas, they say, are dogmatic. So he says to Balaram Babu's father, "Most people are dogmatic". Thakur did not like it. He has come to unite the people of the world. How then could he like dogmatism? Unlettered and yet how large-hearted! Hindus, Muslims, Christians—men of different faiths come to him. He accepts them all. His practising of different religions was to this very purpose—he knew the world will become like one family. Due to the influence of science, communication is becoming easy. Now there is no place for dogmatism. How long before he could foresee!—The world is coming together. This broad-mindedness of his is going to unite all. Already it is being noticed how many peoples are accepting his way of thinking.

After a few moments, reading from the Bhagavata starts; Jagabandhu is reading—

The Reader (Reads)—Sri Krishna says to Arjuna :  
 'O the son of Kunti, kill the wretched Brahmin who murders the sleeping innocent children at night. To pardon such a person is not lawful. He who knows the rules of war will never kill the dead-drunk, the uncautious, those frenzied due to natural calamity, asleep, children women, the unprepared, the surrendering, the mountless and the frightened enemy. Those who are cruel, wily, who by taking away the life of others fortify their own life—punishing them by death will be to their own benefit. The reason—if wrongs are not checked by punishment or expiation, the downfall of the sinner continues. Therefore, kill this sinful relative—murderer.

M.—Formerly, all these rules of war were observed. Now it is not so. Even a hospital may be bombed. They are observed in a society which has God-realization as its ideal. Bharatavarsha is such a country. It has

fallen and is rising again. It will rise very high. Thakur's advent, just for this reason.

The Reader—Ashwatthama was bound and brought before Dropadi. Seeing his condition, Dropadi said, "Free him at once—The guru's family to which all reverence is due will be drowned in the ocean of sorrow—this will be wrong. I am crying, shedding incessant tears all the time at the shocking loss of my sons. Let not his mother Gautami also have to shed tears in the same way."

M.—Just see. She lost five sons, so much sorrow for her, but even then, she did not give up her duty. This is possible only in India. She had lost everything herself—but she doesn't pay much heed to that—her object of attention is Gautami. Lest she should have to fall in this fire of grief, this is her only thought. This is what is called divine disposition. What a heroism in spite of her being a woman. Where others' interest comes first and one's own interest comes later, there resides this divine disposition. In other words, the abode of God. When the opposite is the case, it is animal disposition, human disposition. Sri Krishna was with them, you see. That is why such a high ideal. Such a thing is rare in the world. Hearing these great words of Dropadi, Shri Krishna said, "Yes, the guru's son cannot be killed." The murderer can be killed but as the guru's son he cannot be. Even so, to save both sides, the guilty should be punished and yet his life saved. On Sri Krishna's advice Arjuna, having pierced a hole in the jewel of his forehead, exiled Ashwatthama. May be the jewel was tied to his top tuft of hair that was cut. This is a death like insult. It is for this reason, I believe, that the people of the west (West Bengal) don't let anybody touch the top tuft of hair.

M. (To Amrit)—Ahalya, Dropadi, Kunti, Tara, Mandodari—they all had more than one husband, even so they

deserve to be remembered every morning. Why so ? I have asked a sadhu who told me, "For the reason that they are bhaktas."

Jagabandhu—Were there no other bhaktas that only they should be remembered ? Were they bhaktas and polyandrous at the same time or did they become bhaktas later on ?

M.—There is no other case like theirs, you see—a bhakta as well as polyandrous. Only she is a *sati* (chaste) who has one husband. They had bhakti and attraction for more than one man simultaneously. It is said that Dropadi also desired Karana secretly. Mary, the disciple of Jesus was a prostitute. She was turned into a saint by his contact. After the crucifixion, she was the first to whom Jesus gave darshana. Mary had cried a potful of tears for God. God judges the mind. They who cry for him a potful of tears, then he lifts in His lap. Genuine tears for Him are needed.

M.—The War of Kurukshetra was over. Dhritarashtra, Kunti and the Pandavas are sitting together. Gandhari is smitten by grief. Sri Krishna, consoling her says, "Devī give up your grief. Death will carry away all, sooner or later. Engage your mind in the meditation of the Self."

"In Kurukshetra, perhaps some twenty lakhs of people were killed. It happened in the distant past, so it does not touch the mind so much. But very recently, five lakhs of people died in Japan. In one stroke five lakhs ! What a terrible thing for that country ! Such a catastrophe has no parallel in the world. They know they have a volcano below. If they still choose to live there then they have to die.

"If we had the sight to see from here, if we could see all, what a terrible shock it would have been. That

He has not given. Man while living in this world giving his mind to enjoyments has grown powerless. To add to it, if he could see all this external distress, he would have no way out. "Uncle look after yourself." That is why God did not grant us the sight to see distant things. But He can do anything. What would have been our condition, just imagine, on seeing the people of the earth smitten by grief at the loss of their children? Besides there is grief of many kinds. Seeing them all what would have been our condition? Think only of your own affairs. They are quite enough.

Thakur had said, "One day, I saw in dhyana, a Himalayan high tower of dead-bodies, and I was sitting in the midst of them." In other words, the whole world is a cremation ground. Everybody has the impress of death fixed in his face. So the tower of death. If somebody were to think on just this picture and perform japa, he would attain perfection. But who has the awakening?

Calcutta, September 6, 1923 (A.D.)

20th of Bhadra, 1330 (Bengali year)

Thursday.





'M.' (Mahendranath Gupta), an erudite scholar of the Calcutta University was a direct and intimate disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva, the Avatara of the Age. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'With these very eyes I saw you among the singers of Sri Chaitanya's Sankirtana.'—'Hearing you read the Chaitanya Bhagavata, I have recognized you.'—'You belong to the ever-perfected class.'—'You are my own, of the same substance as father and son.'—'You belong to my inner circle.'—'You are one of those who trade in jewellery of the Spirit.'—'You will have to do a little of Divine Mother's work, you will have to teach the Bhagavata to people.'—'Ma, illumine him : otherwise how will he illumine others.'—'Except me, he knows nothing.'—'Ma, you have endowed him only with a *kala* (one sixteenth part of Divine Energy) ! O, I see this will suffice to carry out Your mission.'

About M.'s everlasting monument the Veda-like great classic of the age—The *Kathamrita* or the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother said, 'One day as I heard you reading from the *Kathamrita*, I felt as if he (Sri Ramakrishna) himself was talking.'

Swami Vivekananda said, "It is indeed wonderful. The move is quite original—It has been reserved for you this great work."

Romain Rolland, the western savant said. "Their ( of the records of M. ) exactitude is almost stenographic."

Aldous Huxley said, "M. produced a book unique ..... in the literature of hagiography. No other saint has had so able and idelfatigable a Boswell."

Christopher Isherwood was only emphasizing a truth when he said, "The service M. has rendered us and future generations can hardly be exaggerated."

Swami Vijnanananda, Late President of Sri Ramakrishna Math and Mission and the last intimate direct disciple of Thakur said to M. in Belur Math, "The *Kathamrita* is unique, so also unique is its writer. The more I read the more I feel it anew. Oh! what a wonderful book you have written ! Ninety per cent of the sadhus of the Math have become monks by reading the *Kathamrita* and your company."

The Jugantara said, "The *Kathamrita* is the Gangotri of Neo-Vedanta .... 'Sri Ma, the writer of the *Kathamrita* is the Bhagiratha of the modern age'..... 'Mahendranath is the Narada of the Kaliyuga'.... 'One of the two main pillars of Neo-Vedanta is Swami Vivekananda, the other is Sri Ma'..... 'Sri Ma is the seer of this Great Truth, he is the visible ideal of the house-holder.'"

